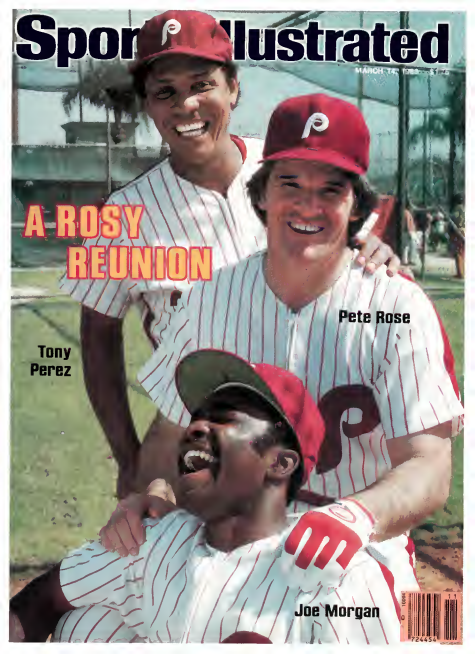


Sports Illustrated



MARCH 14, 1983 \$3.50

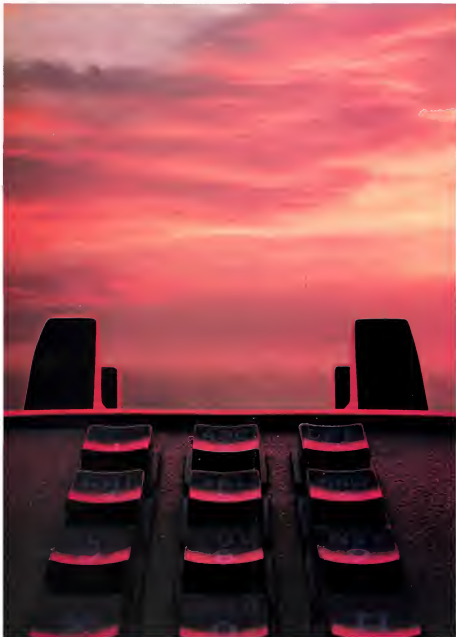
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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



FORMER FIGHTER FUSSMAN: WRITER WITH PUNCH

Calvin Fussman, whose profile of WBA light heavyweight champion Michael Spinks begins on page 34, has been around boxing since he was, at age 16, a 106-pound Golden Gloves in New York, where he had what he frankly describes as a "rather unremarkable" ring career. However, everything else about Fussman, now 26, is, it has been, otherwise, including his head, which he has kept shaved since last year. Why? "Because I'd always wanted to know what my skull looked like," he says airily. "In airports people think I'm a member of the Hare Krishnas, or they call me Gandhi."

Fussman, who was born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, graduated in 1978 from the University of Missouri's School of Journalism, where he gave the commencement address. His first job out of school was a one-year hitch as a sportswriter for *The Miami Herald's* Palm Beach bureau. SI Reporter Bruce Anderson, who succeeded Fussman at the *Herald*, says, "When I arrived, the stories about Cal were already of mythical proportion. One had him routinely hauling his typewriter out onto the lawn to get the creative juices going. Or he'd take his clothes off, piece by piece, until the story really started to flow." In another enduring

tale, the *Herald's* state editor arrives unexpectedly at the bureau at 3 a.m. and encounters Fussman face down in a doorway, sleeping off an evening's entertainment at Roxy's, a popular local hangout. "When he tripped over me, I remember yelling, 'Can't a guy get a decent night's sleep around here?'" Fussman says. The editor fled, returning the next morning to find Fussman nattily dressed in a three-piece suit, pecking away at a story.

After a year in St. Louis, where he's best remembered for his Cardinal stories in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and shadowboxing in the newspaper parking lot at 4 a.m., Fussman became a contributing editor at now-defunct *Inside Sports*. For two years he lived at the Times Square Motor Hotel in Manhattan, in an area famed for hustlers of every stripe. "I was stockpiling experiences for a career as a fiction writer," he explains.

In the meantime he was dealing ably with fact. An *Inside Sports* piece on the relationship between New Orleans Saints linebacker Ricky Jackson and his boyhood friend Remy Johnson was included in *Best Sports Stories 1982*. More recently, he has written a sports-injury piece for *Esquire* and one based on a ride down the Mississippi River on a towboat, which appeared in *Louisiana Life* magazine.

"I just do whatever comes naturally," says Fussman, who nowadays lives in Miami, where he visits Bart's Barber Shop twice a week. Fussman hasn't put a razor to his own skin since 1981, and when he gets a shave at Bart's, it's all the way up and over.

"I like it," he says of his smooth pate, "and you know what? My mother likes it, too. And I figure that when your mother likes something, you're in pretty good shape."

Philip D. Hurd



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1982 NCAA Championship Basketball Tournament: The North Carolina Tar Heels win their first NCAA title after six trips to the Final Four—63-62

Photo by Gregory Heisler

Oh for six, Goose eggs by the half dozen. To win the Tar Heels had to significantly alter their strategy against Georgetown's 7-foot monster-child, Pat Ewing. ... Eventually, they had to rely on Forward James Worthy (who made 13 of 17 field-goal attempts and had 28 points ...) to rush down the floor and jam the ball through the hoop before Ewing, a human PAC-MAN, swallowed them all alive. The first four Carolina baskets weren't hoops at all but goaltending violations by Ewing, who was hurtling about the place as if on a pogo stick. Talk about the Sultan of Swat.

—Curry Kirkpatrick, *SI*—April 5, 1982

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VIEWPOINT

by WIL WILSON

A MOTHER WHOSE SON SHINES ONLY IN SPORTS LAMENTS HIS CLOUDED FUTURE

I've heard a lot of discussion lately about putting new restrictions on the eligibility requirements for participation in high school and college athletics. It has been suggested that kids who can't carry a C average should not be allowed to play high school sports or qualify for an athletic scholarship to college. It's a national disgrace, I've read, that high school boys and girls who can't even pass English are allowed to be on teams, just because they are good in sports. Some critics complain that colleges make it easier for sports stars to maintain their grades by allowing them to take only "easy" classes, like physics. My feeling is, why not?

I should admit right from the start that I'm not an impartial observer in this argument, but the mother of a son who has been labeled a "dumb jock." This is written, with pain, in his defense and in the defense of others like him.

Randy has never been good in school. I'm not exactly sure why. He was diagnosed by a school psychologist as severely dyslexic, but I'm not completely comfortable with an explanation that seems to be a catchall for a whole collection of learning problems. Whatever the reason, despite his higher than average IQ, each of Randy's nine years in school—he repeated third grade and is now in eighth—has been a struggle.

Randy can tear a racing bike completely apart and put it back together; he can draw a good likeness of the human form; he can carry on an intelligent conversation on almost any subject, he conscientiously does his homework every night and studies hours for each test, but to no avail. He's still one of those kids who can't pass English. Randy is a standout in football, baseball, wrestling and track, but to his school the only thing that really matters is his grade-point average.

Randy played football this year, as a running back on offense and a linebacker on defense, and was first in yards per carry and second in tackles. His football statistics give him some pride in himself. If he feels small and anxious in the classroom, the gridiron is a place where he

can shine. I don't know if he will get to play again. He was just pulled from the wrestling team because of his English grade. I know that participating in sports is supposed to be a carrot—an incentive for kids to measure up scholastically. But for some, like Randy, no matter how much they want the carrot, they simply aren't capable of making the grade.

Larry Bird was not a noted scholar in high school or in college—but he almost single-handedly took Indiana State to the NCAA finals in 1979. He went to the Boston Celtics after graduation and is acknowledged by many to be one of the all-time great basketball players. Basketball was his best subject. So what if he wasn't a genius in the classroom, he is a genius on the basketball court. Isn't that reason enough to let him play?

Americans like to think of athletics as endowed with the innocence of freckle-faced boys playing casual games of sandlot baseball. But in this we fool ourselves. Sports today mean multimillion-dollar TV contracts for colleges and universities with superior teams because fans enjoy watching outstanding young athletes perform. High school and college sports are virtually the only means by which a young person may enter professional athletics. Only a few especially talented boys and girls will ultimately succeed, but they deserve the opportunity to compete in their area of excellence, the same as aspiring engineers and economists do.

All kids don't excel in all areas. Is it fair to tell some that because they can't live up to the standards in the area that we have deemed most important, they don't deserve to participate in any other? What if the situation were reversed? Would it be just to tell a child he couldn't qualify for computer classes because he couldn't punt a football? Why must we classify our young people so rigidly? Why can't we let each boy and girl go in the direction that their natural talents take them? If it happens to be jumping a hurdle or dunking a basketball, so be it. Are we to reserve all the rewards for the lucky few who are able to master everything and deny for the others, like Randy, any pride in themselves? Do we tell kids like Randy—"If you can't do this one thing, you can't do anything?" Isn't it possible to give all of our children the feeling that they can belong, whether it be in scholastics or sports?

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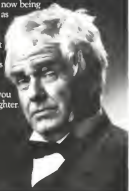
Inventor

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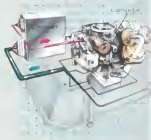
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Footloose

by FRANZ LIDZ

GOLFERS IN ZAMBIA SOMETIMES SAVE THEIR BEST STROKES FOR THE CROCS

For most of the last decade, the world's toughest 18 holes have lain not along the foggy shores of Pebble Beach or on the wind-whipped undulations of St. Andrews, but rather in Zimbabwe, formerly known as Southern Rhodesia. During the civil war that ended in 1980, the rule book at the Hillside Golf Club in Umtali—a course once shelled by black nationalist guerrillas from across the border in Mozambique—allowed a player a free drop if his ball landed in a crater caused by mortar fire. On another course, in Centenary, players were permitted to repeat a shot if their swing had been interrupted by gunfire or explosions, and they were admonished to check for land mines before putting. The possibility of snipers

lurking in the bush at the 1976 Victoria Falls Classic gave new meaning to the term "bunker."

But now that things have calmed down in Zimbabwe, the distinction of being the world's most hazardous course may belong to the Konkola Golf Club in Chililabombwe, Zambia, Zimbabwe's neighbor to the north. Chililabombwe, a small copper-mining town in the country's north, is known for its idyllic subtropical climate, and the Konkola Mine, one of the richest in the world. But it's the course, originally called Bancroft Golf Club and renamed after Zambia won independence in 1964, that's clearly the pride of the old colonialists of the region. You really know you're not at Augusta when you see the following on the scorecard: "A ball coming to rest in a hippo footprint may be lifted and dropped in the nearest possible position to provide maximum relief." Seventousand-pound hippos don't tiptoe; ostriches could nest in the divots they leave.

Hippos track across the course because the Konkola Golf Club is near a wildlife preserve. C.J. MacKay, the club secretary, sometimes must caution visiting players to watch out for poisonous snakes. Not long ago one of his golfing buddies was nipped by a cobra on the back nine. But perhaps Konkola's greatest challenge is the large lake along which holes 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are situated. Many a tee shot has gone into the drink, but that's not the biggest problem. Crocodiles are. In bold, black letters the scorecard warns, NOTE: BEWARE OF CROCODILES ON 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18. "The caddies, who are generally schoolchildren, search for the lost balls," says MacKay. To date, four caddies have been bitten while on ball retrieval expeditions.

Occasionally, even a player is confronted by a croc. A few years back, one hacker was attacked on the 6th fairway. He was rescued, says MacKay, by his partner, who "dispatched the reptile with a blow to the head."

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AND NOW COME THE FLOODS

The last time we looked at the weather in south Florida the problem was chronic drought, a consequence of land development and drainage of wetlands that have disrupted the normal summer rain cycle (SI, March 15, 1982). Now the same area is being devastated by floods from a record winter rainfall. And, paradoxically, the flooding has been exacerbated by the same abusive land and water practices that had contributed to the drought.

The key to the paradox is the Kissimmee River, which until the 1960s meandered southward for 100 miles before flowing into Lake Okeechobee north of the Everglades. But then the state and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers channelized the Kissimmee, reducing its length to 50 miles and destroying much of its floodplain. As a result, there was less water in the area, less evaporation and transpiration—and less rain during the summer wet season. Furthermore, without the floodplain to absorb water or the river's winding course to slow runoff, the danger of flooding was increased on those occasions when heavy rain did fall. And as of last week the man-made channel was funneling so much water into Lake Okeechobee that the lake was rising faster than the Corps could lower it. Water in the diked lake rose at one point during the week to an alarming 18' 2" above sea level. The Corps is hoping to get the level down to the regulation standard of 15' 6" by June 1, the start of the hurricane season; the fear is that the combination of high water and high winds could play havoc with the lake's levees, endangering property and human life in surrounding areas.

The Corps has been releasing all the water it can to the Caloosahatchee River to the west and the St. Lucie Canal to the east. In the interest of sparing the area's \$1 billion-a-year sugarcane crop, it has also diverted floodwaters from the nearby cane fields to the Everglades farther to the south. Fresh water seeping through the St. Lucie Canal has pushed out into the Atlantic and can be detected more than seven miles offshore. Florida's coastal barrier reef will probably suffer substantial damage in some places because of the resulting sudden decrease in salinity. The floodwaters are also carry-

ing decomposed peat sediment into the St. Lucie estuary. "Because of the fresh water and the accumulation of peat, plants and organisms like clams will be wiped out," says Arthur Marshall, an ecologist who has been accurate in the past in pinpointing Florida's numerous environmental ills and what should be done to correct them. "Fish will be driven out. They'll return, but there will be nothing for them to eat."

Conditions are even worse in Everglades National Park, whose population of wading birds has declined disastrously over the past quarter century because of a loss of habitat caused in part by erratic water flow that inundated parts of the park even while other areas were parched. Now the Corps is releasing 2.2 billion gallons of water a day into the park, further jeopardizing birds like the wood stork, a threatened species that feeds on fish and other food concentrated in shallow pools and which has been suffering the effects of excessive water even before the floods. There are 15-year-old wood storks that have successfully nested only twice in their lives because of the difficulty of getting food. The flooding could also imperil the upcoming nesting season of the ground-nesting Cape Sable sparrow, an endangered species.

Other birds likely to suffer reproductive failure because of the floods include the white ibis, glossy ibis, great blue heron, little blue heron, Louisiana heron, green heron, snowy egret, American egret and roseate spoonbill. Johnny Jones, executive director of the Florida Wildlife Federation, says bluntly, "The Everglades and its wildlife are being sacrificed to benefit the giant sugarcane corporations in the Everglades Agricultural Area south of Lake Okeechobee. Nathaniel P. Reed, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and National Parks in the Nixon and Ford administrations, calls the situation "a major natural and man-made tragedy."

Reed is right in indicting nature as well as man. The record rain has been caused in part by the so-called Southern Oscillation, a change in atmospheric circulation on a global scale (it's also largely responsible for the storms that have battered Southern California) prompted by a shift in recent months of warm water

from the western to eastern Pacific Ocean. But the channelization of the Kissimmee River has made matters even worse. This lends urgency to a law passed by the Florida legislature in 1976 to restore the river basin. Although the Corps of Engineers was supposed to come up with a restoration plan, it has instead been sitting on its bureaucratic backside as beleaguered south Florida has battled first the drought and now the deluge.

KEEPING AHEAD OF INFLATION

As reported in the cover story of our Oct. 7, 1968 issue, the combined salaries of the starting lineup of that year's defending champion St. Louis Cardinals, eight regulars plus Pitcher Bob Gibson, came to \$565,000. Today the Cardinals are again the defending world champions, and the salaries of the eight regulars and Pitcher Bruce Sutter amount to \$5.91 million. Shortstop Ozzie Smith earns more all by himself, an estimated



\$1.1 million, than the entire nine-man 1968 Cardinals lineup, and so do teammates Sutter (\$1 million), Keith Hernandez (\$760,000), Darrell Porter (\$750,000) and Ken Oberkfell (\$600,000). The worst-paid of the '83 Cards, Dave Long, outearns the best-paid '68 Card, Gibson, \$300,000 to \$85,000. The increase in the team's nine-man payroll over the 15-year span amounts to 1,046% compared with a 188.2% rise over the same period in the consumer price index.

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This week's far-beyond-the-call-of-duty-while-recruiting award goes to University of Washington Assistant Football Coach Trent Walters for his dedication in trying to land Linebacker Larry Fitzgerald of Manual Arts High in L.A. Here's the story as recounted by Walters at a recent sportswriters' luncheon:

"No matter how dominant the dad is, the mom is usually going to be the major factor in a kid's decision. In this situation, I told the mom I'd like to come out and visit her at work. She says, 'Fine, I work at the Los Angeles County Coroner's office.' She met me at the door and took me on a tour of the whole place. I even watched an autopsy being performed—for about five minutes. I won the mom, but I lost the kid to USC."

JOKE TIME IN THE NBA

Thank those guys in the NBA can't play defense? Get this: The NBA Players Association has set an April 2 strike deadline (after having rejected one for a day earlier out of the fear that a threat to walk out on April Fools' Day might sound like a joke), and it claims to have done so as a defensive measure. The union allows that its members are happy with the status quo—as well they might be considering that the average NBA salary is \$246,000—but says the players want to bring the league's currently stalled labor negotiations to a head on a timetable of their choosing, i.e., just before the playoffs. The players say they're afraid that the owners, who aren't happy with the existing situation, will otherwise lock them out or unilaterally impose fundamental changes in the league's operations at the start of next season.

So much for the whys and wherefores of the union's strike threat. Now for a word about the biggest change the NBA brass has in mind. According to the owners, the NBA's huge payrolls have created a sea of red ink in which several money-losing teams will drown unless the players association throws the league a life preserver in the form of a "cap" on payrolls based on a fixed percentage, still to be negotiated, of the league's revenues. This proposal, which management wants to implement as soon as possible, would likely result in a dramatic reduction in some teams' payrolls. Apprehensive about the jobs that would be lost if fran-

continued

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**THE MORE-THAN-ONE-COMPANY
INSURANCE AGENT.**

chises folded, Larry Fleisher, general counsel for the NBA Players Association, has indicated a willingness to accept a cap on salaries but only after the 1986-87 season, at which time the current free-agent arrangement expires.

If the NBA doesn't win an immediate ceiling on salaries and if franchises and jobs are lost, both sides in the dispute will have to swallow hard. But neither of those eventualities would necessarily be a bad thing. With reference to the owners' demands for a salary cap, it's hard to sympathize with pro sports entrepreneurs who love to talk about the joys of competition in business and sports yet keep pleading for competition-stifling bailouts from their unions and/or Congress. As for the possible loss of franchises, some of the weaker ones—those most often mentioned are Cleveland, Utah, San Diego and Indiana—may fold even if the owners get a cap. At any rate, the death of troubled teams could well produce a stronger and financially healthier NBA.

One thing that wouldn't do anybody much good is a strike. The old contract between the players and the league expired nine months ago, but both sides agreed to abide by it while negotiations continued. How long that may be is now in doubt; last week the parties met for the first time in nearly three weeks but broke off talks after 24 minutes. This was unwelcome news to Denver Nuggets Coach Doug Moe, who says, "Football and baseball were strong enough to recover from their strike, but I don't know if we could survive one." That fear is sufficiently realistic to make the NBA players' threat to hit the bricks sound like a cruel joke, April Fools' Day or not.

THOUGHT FOR OUR TIMES

A comic-strip boxer nowadays would probably have to be known as Marvelous José Muhammad (Macho Man) Palooka.

ON SIGNING UNDERCLASSMEN (CONT.)

In their avowed determination to keep other college football players from following Herschel Walker's lead in turning pro before completing his collegiate eligibility (SCORECARD, March 7), professional and college sports administrators and coaches gained a new ally last week. Their comrade-in-arms is Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, who introduced

a bill to grant an antitrust exemption allowing pro leagues to adopt rules against the signing of underclassmen; the NFL and USFL already have such rules, which they follow when convenient, and the NBA had one until it was struck down by an antitrust suit brought by Spencer Haywood in 1971. Specter insists that the purpose of his legislation is to encourage student-athletes to finish college, but it would really only force them to complete their eligibility, which is another thing altogether; even with the NFL's existing rule, fewer than one-third of the league's players have college degrees.

Specter calls his bill the Collegiate Student-Athlete Protection Act of 1983, but far from protecting athletes, it would deprive them of their freedom of choice in entering the pro sports job market. The only people the measure would protect are the college coaches and athletic directors who, by means of long practice hours, the imposition of academically worthless jock courses and the arbitrary withdrawal of scholarships, put the biggest stumbling blocks in the way of student-athletes' getting degrees.

Specter defends the NFL's hands-off-underclassmen rule that his bill would protect by saying, "The absence of any successful legal challenge to the existing rule is significant evidence of its value." But that statement is as inaccurate as it is illogical. Even if the NFL rule were perfectly legal, that wouldn't necessarily mean it was desirable. And, in fact, there are serious questions about its legality. College players have threatened to go to court to overturn it on antitrust grounds, as Haywood did with the NBA's similar rule, but most of them have been scared off by the prospect of having to sit out one or more seasons while legal proceedings dragged on. One who wasn't scared off was Notre Dame Running Back Al Hunter, who was suspended from school for disciplinary reasons in 1977 and threatened to sue if he wasn't allowed to play in the NFL in what would have been his senior year. The NFL backed down, and Hunter played that year for the Seattle Seahawks. So much for the NFL's cries of foul when the USFL made a similar exception in Walker's case.

And so much for Specter's argument about the supposed unavailability of the NFL rule. The NFL itself has conceded that the rule may be vulnerable to a challenge under antitrust law, and Specter

obviously is haunted by the same possibility. Otherwise, why did he feel the need to introduce his bill? One possible explanation for so ill-conceived a piece of legislation, of course, is that he hopes to be dragged into the limelight hanging on to No. 34's jersey.

A FORDNESS FOR THE FINAL FOUR

There's one big-time basketball school that has made the Final Four of postseason college hoops tournaments in each of the past four years, and it isn't North Carolina, UCLA, Virginia or any of the other institutions that immediately leap to mind. The school is Purdue, which at times during that four-year span might have been considered no better than fourth in Indiana, behind Indiana, Notre Dame and, at least when Larry Bird was there, Indiana State.

In postseason play, though, the Boilermakers are tough. They were 27-8 and runner-up in the NIT tournament in 1978-79, 23-10 and third in the NCAA tourney in '79-80, 21-11 and third in the NIT in '80-81 and 18-14 and runner-up in the NIT last season. As of last weekend, the Boilermakers had an 18-8 record, were in a four-way tie for third in the Big Ten and figured to be invited to either the NCAA or NIT tournament, where, given their past postseason successes, it would be best not to write them off too soon.

THEY SAID IT

• Darryl Dawkins, New Jersey Nets center, discussing the owner of his previous team, the Philadelphia 76ers: "He'd come in after games and put his arm around me and tell me what I should do on the court, like he was trying to coach me. Hey, Harold Katz couldn't be a coach for Wells Fargo."

• Joe Altobelli, the Orioles' new manager, on his so-far-amicable relations with pitcher Jim Palmer, the nemesis of former skipper Earl Weaver: "If I go another five minutes, do I set a record?"

• Greg Luzinski, the Chicago White Sox' massively built designated hitter, on the team's use of aerobic dancing to get into shape: "If I thought this would get us into a World Series, I'd wear a tutu."

• Bob Horner, Braves third baseman, on why he no longer sports a beard: "I've been traveling so much, I haven't had time to grow it."

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Whip through a hairy s-curve



Teaching An Old Dog New Tricks

Among the things Herschel Walker learned in his losing USFL debut was how to sit on the bench
by **PAUL ZIMMERMAN**

Day 1 of the U.S. Football League didn't belong to Herschel Walker. It didn't even belong to his team, the New Jersey Generals. The Los Angeles Express beat the Generals 20-15 in the Los Angeles Coliseum last Sunday as Generals Coach Chuck Fairbanks stuck by a statement he'd been making all week but few people had taken seriously—that he wasn't going to change his offense to accommodate one player with only a week's practice under his belt, even if he were the greatest runner to come out of college football since O.J. Simpson or, maybe, Red Grange.

Walker isn't ready to tear the new league apart. Perhaps in another month or so, but not yet, not while the playbook is still pretty much a mystery to him. His numbers on Sunday were 65 yards rushing on 16 carries, including a five-yard touchdown run in the first quarter, a walkover because New Jersey Tight End Sam Bowers and Right Guard Wayne Harris removed all of L.A.'s

continued

Walker's touchdown was a walkover behind blocks by Harris (left) and Bowers.



Bodde, who joined L.A. expressly to showcase himself, did so with 77 yards rushing.

HERSCHEL'S DEBUT *Continued*

roadblocks. One pass was thrown to him, and he caught it, on a little crossing pattern, for just three yards.

The Generals' press book notes that Walker had 90 runs of 10 or more yards in his three-year Georgia career. On Sunday he had none. His longest gain was nine, on his very first carry, a strongside pitchout from, naturally, the L, his college formation. His worst rush went for minus-five, one of his two minuses on the day. The rest of his runs were threes and fours and sixes, journeyman stuff. Walker was on the field for 37 of the Generals' 75 plays from scrimmage, and in passing situations and when the Generals were playing catch-up at the end, he came out for 5' 10", 195-pound Larry Coffey, a New York Giants' cut last season.

Walker was most productive in the first quarter, when he was on the field for 14 of the Generals' 18 plays, carrying the ball nine times for 38 yards. Then it seemed as if Fairbanks was saying to the 34,002 fans in the stands: "O.K., we've given you your show. Now it's time to win the game."

The crowd didn't seem to feel cheated. There was little booing. Afterward there was considerable action at the advance reservations windows. On the whole, the USFL crowds surpassed expectations, with an average attendance for five games last Sunday of 40,943 and a high of

45,167 in Tempe to see the Oakland Invaders play the Arizona Wranglers (plus a one hour pre-game Beach Boys concert). The smallest crowd was—yes, the 34,002 at the L.A. game, which had figured to be the biggest draw of the day. Healthy numbers for a fledgling league, although no one knows how many of those tickets were giveaways.

The caliber of play in L.A. was better than that of the early WFL games, more balanced than the ones during the first year of the AFL, where the action was heavily geared to the pass. The hitting was well below NFL standards. There were a lot of missed tackles. Coverage in the secondary was loose. There were many missed assignments, but don't forget that there hadn't been any exhibition games.

So why quibble? After all, the USFL put people in the stands for Week 1, and a healthy collection of young and eager rookies was on view. Most notable among them was Chicago's star receiver out of Grambling, Trumaine Johnson, who caught 11 passes for 158 yards and one touchdown in the Blitz' 28-7 rout of the Washington Federals. And Walker made more than a token appearance, although it did seem that Fairbanks left him out of situations ideally suited to him.

In the fourth quarter, for instance, after the Generals, with Walker on the bench, had driven 67 yards to score a TD

that brought them within five points of the Express, at 20-15, they lined up for a two-point conversion. No Walker. "Three yards is tough to get running," Fairbanks said. Maybe, but Herschel Walker is still Herschel Walker. Under pressure. Quarterback Bobby Scott threw a pass that was picked off.

"I don't want to question Coach Fairbanks' decision," said L.A. Halfback Anthony Davis, "but most people anywhere would say Herschel's got to be in there."

Then there was the Generals' final drive, which began on the Express' 31 (after L.A. Coach Hugh Campbell had amazingly gone for a first down on fourth-and-one and fallen short) and ended just outside Los Angeles' two-yard line. Walker carried for six on the first play, and then reserve Fullback Maurice Carthon went for two. Two yards needed for a first down and two plays to get them—and Walker came out. Carthon picked up the first down, blasting to the 12-yard line. Walker came back in. He lost a yard. Out he came, and out he stayed, even when the Generals had a third-and-three at the five.

"God almighty, he's only been practicing for a week," Fairbanks said. "A veteran back with that short a time, with no familiarity with your system, would have a tough enough time, let alone a rookie. He came out in the second half because they were doing different things with their defense—stunts and blitzes that we hadn't expected. I didn't want to expose him to that."

Well, how about when it was third-and-three at the five? A 220-pound back who can run a 4.25 40—"That's the last clocking they got on me at Georgia," Walker says—might have been useful.

"I really don't have an answer for why he came out then," Fairbanks said. "I felt confident with the way we were going with the people in there."

"Listen, Herschel did a fine job for us today, considering the amount of practice time he had. A few mistakes here and there, but not bad considering..."

Walker was asked if pro football was what he'd expected. "Tougher," he said. "They had more speed than I thought, plus they knew how to execute."

Was he confused out there? "No, I don't think so."

Dominant? "Well, I'm not going out on the field thinking like that."

What are you going to do now?" "Work on getting better."

And so on. Lurking somewhere in the background was the old, depressing memory of Simpson's debut in pro football, when Buffalo Bills Coach John Rauch built his attack around Jack Kemp's arm rather than O.J.'s legs, until Lou Saban took over and set the matter straight. Could that possibly happen here?

"You don't have to worry," Fairbanks said. "He's got a lot of football ahead of him. Don't forget we still have 17 games to play this season."

The game came down to the final 49 seconds and one of those strange plays in which practically everyone involved fouls up. The Generals faced fourth-and-12 at the Express' 14-yard line. Walker was out of the game. But what was the formation New Jersey used in this situation? An I, with two tight ends and only one wide receiver, Larry Brodsky, who was split out right. "We wanted backside protection and outside containment for blitz coverage," was Fairbanks' explanation.

But not to be outcoached, Campbell assigned only one man, reserve Cornerback Tyrone Justin, a San Diego castoff, to Brodsky.

"We were fooled," Campbell said. "We were not strategically prepared for that formation."

Brodsky ran a corner pattern and gave Justin a healthy shove. No flag. Scott laid the ball in perfectly and Brodsky caught it at the three. All he had to do was fall forward and the Generals would win the game. Instead he juggled the ball and stepped out of bounds inches short of a first down. End of contest.

The best player in the game was a 5' 11", 195-pound L.A. halfback named Tony Boddie, who ran 13 times for 77 yards and caught five passes for 49 more and the TD that put L.A. ahead to stay. If the USFL is to establish an identity this year, its strength will be its homegrown talent, unknowns like Boddie, a terrific little back on the style of Kansas City's Joe Delaney. He caught 50 passes for Montana State last fall and said that until Sunday he'd never played before a home crowd larger than 15,000.

Someone asked him how it felt to outplay Walker. "Doesn't mean anything," he said. "Herschel's a great runner. Tony Boddie can run and block and catch passes. Herschel does his thing. I do mine."

Campbell said his scouting books in Edmonton, where he coached the CFL's

Eskimos last year, had Boddie rated as the sixth-best American college back. So how come he waited until the 12th round to draft him?

"Frankly, I didn't think we'd be able to sign him," Campbell said.

Boddie laughed at that news. He had signed a one-year contract for roughly \$30,000. "I could have made more in the NFL," he said, "but no one was interested in me. I got feelers from Dallas and Seattle, but nothing very serious. I sacrificed money to get the one-year contract. After I've shown what I can do, I'll have some bargaining leverage."

And maybe in that little capsule we can see the grievous error the NFL made in not shortstopping some of this talent, not devoting some early attention to the decent college players, say a phone call to let them know there's a place for them in the big league, that they are wanted and would get a long, healthy look.

"A phone call like that," Boddie said, "would have sold me on the NFL."

L.A. Raiders owner Al Davis, in evaluating the emergence of the USFL, decried the "country club mentality" and "Rip Van Winkle approach" of the NFL. Maybe he has something. For a new league, 40,000 fans per game isn't too bad—for openers.

END

In the Generals' last gasp, Brodsky caught a pass and fell on the first-down pylon, but New Jersey got the short end of the measurement.



Guillermo Vilas and Jose-Luis Clerc do not shed a tear for each other, but they sent the U.S. Davis Cuppers home weeping **by FRANK DEFORD**

Don't Cry For Them, Argentina



The Argentine team enjoyed the unflinching support of a boisterous Buenos Aires crowd.

I wanted to show my people that I'm really Argentine. It was very important, especially at this time, to win for my country. This is one of the very few times I think I'm a member of the team.

—Jose-Luis Clerc, after beating John McEnroe

All those people you meet in Davis Cup tell you you have to win because you're representing your country. People talk about a team. But when you get out there, you're all alone between four lines, with only the ball. Then it's just you. A team is not a marriage.

—Guillermo Vilas, after beating McEnroe.

The parlay for 1983 is the 76ers and Argentina. It looks as if it might be their year. For last week, upon the red ground-brick courts of the Buenos Aires Lawn Tennis Club, where there's no

law and American Davis Cup teams invariably crumble into bad memories, Clerc and Vilas whipped McEnroe and his compatriot, Gene Mayer, in the first round of this year's competition. The U.S. had won the Cup in four of the last six years and two years running. Not coincidentally, the two Yankee defeats in that span had come in Buenos Aires.

What a week it was in Argentina. When was the last time any tie featured four players ranked among the Top 10 in the world? When was the last time America was the underdog in any tennis competition? When was the last time the controversy swirled not about the U.S., but the opposition? *La Prensa* of Argentina may have called McEnroe *El Irascible*, but Clerc and Vilas went through a minute that rivaled the best of Stenbrenner and Martin. For Argentina the victory was the first glimmer of a national come-

back, the first international event of any consequence held in the country since war and death and generals joined to shut out the light a year ago.

Perhaps no tennis team ever embodied so much of the character of the nation it represented as Argentina's did. There's an old joke in Buenos Aires that God Himself was so chagrined when He realized how much He had bestowed upon Argentina that the only way He could even things up for the rest of the world was to make Argentines. Certainly Argentina is as close as we come to a Babel these days. Many of its denizens seem to be confused about their identity, thinking first of themselves not as Argentines but as products of a foreign heritage. At a dinner party last week, a rancher's wife explained the situation succinctly: "The trouble with Argentine men is that they all want to dress like the British, think like the Italians and act like Americans."

Ah yes, and both Vilas and Clerc have a good deal of French blood. Moreover (astrologer's delight?), they were born six years but only one calendar day apart—in August, no less—two displaced Gallic Leos who would rule the same crowded den. In the past, each barely acknowledged the existence of the other, except when backbiting like fishwives or trying, at the other's expense, to squeeze the national tennis federation out of a few more hundred million pesos, of which there are now 80,000 to the dollar.

Less than a week before the tie, Vilas, the older of the two at 30, hadn't decided whether he would play against the U.S. Last year Clerc, in protest against Vilas' getting the lion's share of the Argentine team's receipts from Davis Cup play, skipped the first round, against France. His absence cost Argentina the tie. It also cost the country a seeded position for 1983, which helps explain why the world's two best teams ended up squaring off in the opening round.



Club were partisan but warm, and the officiating was scrupulously fair. "You see," says an American businessman who was tossed in jail during the war, "one of the greatest gifts of the Argentines is a short memory." Obviously, he should know.

An expression often heard in Argentina is *mas o menos* (literally, "more or less," but implying, "things could be better, things could be worse"). The phrase sums up local attitudes toward war and inflation, debts and high interest rates, generals and opportunists, the fact that 6,000 enemies of the junta have been missing since the mid-1970s, steaks and wine. The restaurants are jammed, the beaches packed, the shopping mall along the Avenida de Florida thronged, the tennis matches sold out. Business as usual. The kids were going back to school Monday after their summer vacation, and insiders were buying up black market

continued

There was an exultant bit of body Latin from Clerc when he finally defeated McEnroe, who got shoulder rubs of DMSO from Ashe.

There had been speculation that Argentina would consent to play in the States rather than at home because of residual anti-American feeling from the Falklands/Malvinas war. That conflict may have been the only thing—save *furbo*—that has ever truly united the nation. However, the Argentines were so disillusioned upon discovering how the junta had conducted the war that they quickly redirected their antipathy from America and England to their own government. The crowds at the Lawn Tennis





In the doubles on Saturday, the rare pairing of El Campéon and Batata made a five-set run at McEnroe and Fleming before losing.

DAVIS CUP *continued*

U.S. dollars in anticipation of a new devaluation. Argentina is testament to the late-20th-century frame of mind: a determination to have our cake and eat it too. *Más o menos.*

Clerc's problem is that Vilas is far more popular among their countrymen than he is. Argentines feel that Clerc has somehow tarnished the image of their original campeón. Vilas has won four Grand Slam titles, and he makes the gossip columns the world over for dating beauty queens and princess beauties. (The players on tour, not so impressed, sometimes call Vilas "Prince," as in, "Hey, Prince, pass the salt.") Clerc is taller than El Campéon, better looking, better built, more agreeable and at times has been ranked higher. But he never has caught on. Vilas has heart, a *corazón* as big as all outdoors. Clerc, the people say, merely possesses talent, a fringe commodity in a land where inflation sprints at 500% per annum. Vilas looks as if he were playing up through the dirt, his shoes, socks, even his knees damn near covered with red grime. Clerc wears a dainty gold wristwatch even on the court.

He walks the streets of Buenos Aires virtually unnoticed by the people Vilas casually calls "my public." You know what Clerc's nickname is? Batata. That means "sweet potato."

But on Thursday, at the drawing the day before the tie, in public, for all the world to see, El Campéon carefully shook Batata's hand. Argentina had lost a war and the World Cup, and it had never won a Davis Cup. Now it was time to join together and remedy that.

The next day, after Vilas, as expected, had disposed of Mayer (6-3, 6-3, 6-4) in the opening match, McEnroe and Clerc took the court under an unrelenting afternoon summer sun. Clerc assumed command soon, and when he won the first set 6-4, he spiked the ball he held. Spiked it? Batata? Then he really poured it on. Poor McEnroe staggered about, his pasty, city nose shining bright red. Upon his brow he wore a bandanna. The way he was playing, it looked more like a tourniquet to the brain. "No feel," he kept saying to Arthur Ashe, the U.S. captain, during changeovers. "I just don't have any feel out there." Members of the American contingent sent notes to Ashe—have him try this, do that—but

Ashe didn't even bother to pass them along. To what purpose? McEnroe couldn't do a thing.

The stands were going berserk. High in a corner, where a score or more of loud fans in T-shirts with horns and whistles and flags had been let in free to lead cheers, the national soccer song swept down. *Vamos, Argentina, Vamos!* ("Let's Go, Argentina, Let's Go!") The azure flags mixed with the high azure sky. In the first five games of the second set, El Trascible got all of seven points, and Clerc won the set 6-0.

Now Ashe began to rub DMSO into McEnroe's sore left shoulder, and a spark began to glow. The bandanna came off, and he kept his southpaw sleeve rolled up in the manner of the punk rockers he fancies. He began to use the whole clay court and, better, to serve and volley as if it were tile. By a quarter-to-seven the match was four hours old, the sun, low in the sky, was glimmering off the smoke that rose from the grills at the concession stands, and the score was even—6-4, 6-0, 3-6, 4-6.

Ashe had continued to rub in the compound. The spectators were hollering, a Greek chorus for every point. "Solencio,

por favor, silencio," the umpire kept calling. The disruptions didn't bother Ashe. They were permitting McEnroe to rest after every point, which was just what he needed. Finally, the Argentine team caught on and began to wave to the crowd to knock it off. Who would ever think that the noise from a packed Latin gallery of 10,000 could damage the good cause? The T-shirted ones kept screaming and singing, even as Clerc's teammates beckoned them to stop.

Such ironies abounded. In the fourth set, for example, Clerc had had only a single troublesome service game, and it cost him the set. McEnroe, on the other hand, had been forced to sweat blood in five straight service games, fighting off nine break points along the way. Yet we are so conditioned to football experts attributing every known action of mankind to momentum, that any student of life knew without doubt the fifth set therefore belonged to McEnroe, to the man coming back.

"No, fifth sets are different," Ashe would say that night. "Momentum stops at the fifth set." Besides, despite all that is vouchsafed on behalf of momentum, it has a flip side. It's a great deal less energizing to give up a lead than it is to struggle to appropriate one. As is so often the case on such occasions, whatever the sport, McEnroe took a deep breath of relief as soon as he drew even. By the time he exhaled, the momentum-less Clerc had broken him for a 2-love edge. Some of the U.S. contingent began clamoring for Ashe to exercise his option to call play off for the night, but he sat tight in the gloaming until Clerc ran the score to 5-2, at which point Ashe called a halt. "The most pressure is trying to serve out a match," he said later. Let Clerc try and do that with as little preparation as possible the next morning. That was Ashe's plan.

The task was clear. McEnroe would have to

hold serve and then break to draw even on service. Clerc would have to hold to win the match—and, quite likely, the tie and the 1983 Davis Cup as well. Butata, sequestered on the Avenida de Florida at the Plaza Hotel with his private coach, Patricio Rodriguez, and away from his wife and child and team, tossed and turned all night. El Inescapable, a few blocks away at the Sheraton, the American bivouac, was so exhausted he couldn't even finish a beer with dinner. He left a fashion show that followed, not being up even to ogling models in leather and furs.

On the morrow McEnroe came out smoking. He held at love and then broke at 15. So the momentum was all his once again. That and 40,000 pesos (as we used to say) will get you a cup of coffee. McEnroe had expended so much psychic energy catching up that he didn't have enough left to win. As he admitted afterward, suddenly, when he was even, when it should have been easy, he "got up-tight." It was all he could do to hold for 5-all, saving three match points. In his next service game the string ran out. At 15-40 McEnroe sent such a simple backhand far over the baseline that Clerc could only stand and gape in astonishment before he exulted for what he had done for himself and his country.

America got its first point late Saturday afternoon when McEnroe and Peter Fleming, his regular stablemate, won

their 10th Davis Cup doubles match in 10 tries. Clerc and Vilas, making a rare appearance as doubles partners, gave the Americans fits before losing 2-6, 10-8, 6-1, 3-6, 6-1. For McEnroe the match was another day at the office. He tried to go into the stands after one obstreperous fan, twice loudly applied a course epi-patch to the entire assemblage, and later picked up a penalty point. These activities served only to postpone the denouement another day.

Vilas was magnificent on Sunday against McEnroe in clinching victory for Argentina. McEnroe had two chances to go up 5-2 and double break in the first set, but he squandered them both and then, remarkably, lost 15 straight games. The obituary read four, love and one, "*Da la, Campeón; da la, Campeón*" ("Give it to him, Champion"), the crowd sang at the end, rocking the joint.

McEnroe was exhausted, from the heat and from the 10 sets he'd played the two previous days. He needs more work on the practice courts, having been away resting his shoulder, which he injured while defeating Ivan Lendl in Philadelphia six weeks ago. The problem is tendinitis—"just a dull pain," says McEnroe—and he plans to return to playing, next week in Munich. That decision might not be worth fusing over, except for the fact that McEnroe rushed back too soon from an ankle injury at this time

last year, and he wasn't the same for months.

The Argentines next must meet Italy—in Italy—in July. Within a few minutes after he sealed the win, Vilas was already saying he wasn't sure whether he'd be available for the tie. As for Clerc, he decided he was injured, so a substitute had to be dispatched to play Mayer in the final meaningless match. The last time the two Leos beat America and McEnroe, in 1980, their continuing disputes were blamed for a desultory loss to Czechoslovakia a few months later. A team is not a marriage. Or anyway, teams, like marriages, can sometimes be annulled. *Más o menos.* **END**



Mayer got beat 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 by Vilas in the opening match.

Rose on third, Morgan on first and Perez standing in the batter's box. "You've seen this before, Doggie," Rose calls to Perez.

Haven't we all? Of course, nobody has seen this situation for more than six years, not since Pete Rose, Joe Morgan and Tony Perez were mainstays of the world champion Cincinnati Reds. But the scene was played once again last Saturday at the Philadelphia Phillies' spring training complex in Clearwater, Fla.

The three of them were teammates in an intrasquad game in which the manag-

ers were coaches Dave Bristol and Bobby Wine—the Bristol Stomps versus the Wine Stewards. In the first inning, Rose, batting second for the Stomps, tripled down the first-base line off Larry Christenson. Morgan, hitting third and flapping his left arm as always, then wangled a base on balls. And, just as in the old days, clean-up man Perez déjà flew out deep to right to score Rose from third with the team's first run.

In the fifth, with the score tied 2-2, Morgan singled off Porfi Altamirano, and Perez followed with a double down

the third-base line, driving in the winning run and keying a three-run rally that carried the Stomps to a 5-2 victory and a free dinner, courtesy of the Stewards.

O.K., it was only an intrasquad game. But this was precisely what the Phillies had in mind when they acquired Morgan, 39, and Perez, 40, in the off-season to go with the 41-year-young Rose. "I did not come here for a reunion," says Morgan. "The Phillies got me to help win them a world championship."

Besides the members of the Big Gray Machine, the Phillies also have Ron



Reed, 40, Bill Robinson, 39, Steve Carlton, 38, and Tug McGraw, 38. Twenty-two of the players on the 40-man roster are more than 30 years old. No wonder Philadelphia President Bill Giles likes to call his team The Wheeze Kids.

Stop me if you've heard any of these: What else could the Phillies call their home park but Veterans Stadium? When Philadelphia has men on, will announcers say the Phils have the ducks on Golden Pond? Will every game be an Old-timers game? To celebrate this, their 100th season, the Phillies conducted a

search for their oldest living former player. No, they didn't discover him on the bench. Actually, they found former Pitcher Johnny Enzmann, 93, of the 1920 Phils living in Fort Lauderdale, where he bowls twice a week and averages 133. Sign 'em up! They could use another good righthander in the bullpen.

The Phillies needed a second baseman to replace Manny Trillo, whom they packaged in a deal for Cleveland Outfielder Von Hayes, so they went out and got Morgan, the National League Comeback Player of 1982, in a five-man deal with San Francisco in December. They needed a righthanded pinch hitter with punch and someone to spell Rose at first, so they signed Perez, whom Boston had released, to a single-season contract in January. "You caddied for Yastrzemski," Rose said to Perez last week. "How does it feel to be caddying for a real ballplayer now?"

That was typical of the former Reds' repartee. "They kept replaying the '75 World Series during infield drills," said Third Baseman Mike Schmidt. "Perez said they wouldn't be wearing world champion rings if he hadn't hit Bill Lee's let-up pitch out of the park. Morgan said they wouldn't have rings if he hadn't had two game-winning hits, and Rose said he hit .370 in the Series." Schmidt got into the spirit of things by rolling his sleeves up to his shoulders and pretending he was Ted Kluszewski, the former Reds slugger and coach.

Phillies Manager Pat Corrales, who didn't make the majors till '64, remembered the first time he became aware of each of the trio. "The Yankees came in to

play us [the Phillies] in spring training in '63," Corrales says. "All Mackey Mantle could talk about was this kid for the Reds who ran to first base after a walk."

"First time I saw Perez was in '63 when he was with Macon and I was with Chattanooga. He was six-two, about 165 pounds, and he could hit. 'Where the hell did they get this guy?' I said to myself."

"First time I saw Morgan, we were playing in the Astrodome, and this five-foot-seven individual walks up to the plate against Chris Short in the ninth inning and hits a homer, and we go inside. I guess we were inside already. Anyway, Gene Mauch, the manager, says, 'Who the hell ever heard of Joe Morgan?' Well, we heard about him for a few more years."

Rose on Perez: "We started the same year, 1960, in Geneva, New York. Reno DeBenedetti was our manager. I came to play second, and Doggie had to move to third. He was built just like Davey Concepcion is now, really skinny. He was just out of Cuba, didn't speak much English, but he was a good guy in the clubhouse even then. Then he filled out. It's funny because he never had the big forearms power hitters have, he was just strong in the bottom. But I never saw a better power hitter than he was in the first half of 1970. He must have had 90 ribbies. He was the whole team."

Perez on Rose: "I was playing second base at Geneva, if you can believe it. Pete was signed in the middle of the season, so they moved me to third. He was an aggressive type of player, but he was not that good an athlete. Three years later I watched him in spring training and

continued

In Philadelphia, They're The Wheeze Kids

Former Reds teammates Pete Rose (left), Joe Morgan and Tony Perez are together in Philly, where they'll play at aptly named Veterans Stadium

by STEVE WULF



THE WHEEZE KIDS continued

couldn't believe it. He'd worked so hard he made himself a ballplayer."

Morgan on Rose: "It wasn't until '65 that I got to know him, but just like everybody else, I became a Pete Rose fan. Even back then, when I was still with Houston, a bond developed between us. We were both second basemen—actually, I was a real second baseman and he just happened to play there—and when

Perez proved in his first intrasquad game that his bat still packs a bunch of punch.

he was running the bases, he would try to knock me over at second. Then I would try to knock him over at second. I remember about 1965 he told me that in seven years I was going to make a \$100,000 salary, which was big, big money in those days. That tells you how long ago that was."

Rose on Morgan: "He was an incredible player at Cincinnati. Still is."

Perez on Morgan: "He was a good player when he came to Cincinnati, but then he put everything together. Two MVPs in a row [1975-76]; you couldn't ask for anything more. I did my part, supplied the home runs and RBIs, but he was doing everybody's part, stealing bases, driving in runs, hitting for average, hitting homers, getting on base. He was doing things he wasn't supposed to be doing. Now all of us are doing something we're not supposed to be doing—we're still playing."

Morgan on Perez: "He could do it in the clutch. Johnny Bench, Pete, me, we got the MVPs, but Tony was just as valuable as we were. He was important in the clubhouse and on the airplanes, too. When they traded him before the '77 season, I got upset. I told the front office, 'Did you think that we might not be able to win without Tony?' The first month and a half of that season, we kept getting into situations that he had always come through in. We kept waiting for him and waiting, but there was no Tony. Tony was in Montreal. There's no doubt in my mind that if he'd played for us in '77, we would have won our third straight World Series."

But they broke up that old gang of Rhine. Perez helped make contenders out of the Expos and Red Sox. Rose went to another world championship in Philadelphia, and Morgan brought his winning ways to the Astros and Giants. Among them, they've played 7,925 games, had 8,711 hits, scored 4,729 runs and won seven World Series rings.

Morgan is coming off a .289 season with 14 homers, 61 RBIs, 24 stolen bases in 28 attempts and one big assist in

knocking the Dodgers out of the pennant race—with a game-winning home run against them on the final day of the season. Two years ago he looked as if he was through.

Morgan on Morgan: "I felt old, and I thought about quitting. I lifted weights before I went back to Houston and picked up a lot of bulk, and I felt sluggish. I was up to 176, 177 pounds, and I'd slowed down at bat and in the field. At San Francisco, Frank Robinson suggested I lose eight pounds. I felt good, and I lost six more. Everything was back to normal again, and I want to lose a few more pounds before the season starts, get down to 160."

Paul Owens, the Phillies' general manager, wouldn't have wanted Morgan two years ago. "We really thought he was over the hill," Owens says, "but I read reports on him last season that said he was quick at the bat and showing more range in the field. I was at Candlestick Park one day, walking toward the clubhouse, when I ran into him. I said, 'Joe, you look terrific.' He said, 'It's funny, but for four years people have been telling me to lose weight. It took me a while to wake up.'"

"He looks 25," says Corrales, and in fact Morgan does look great. "We've got some amazing bodies on this team," says Gus Hoefling, the strength, flexibility and kung fu coach of the Phillies. "and Morgan's is right in there. I've got this special five-step sit-up I make the guys do, and some players can't do five. First day, Morgan cranked out 25."

The Phillies aren't fooling themselves that Morgan can take Trillo's place defensively, but they know they'll get more offense with him. He and Hayes give Philadelphia two left-handed bats it didn't have before. "We got righthanded to death last year," says Owens. Morgan is also holding the fort until Juan Samuel, a heralded 21-year-old second baseman from the Dominican Republic, is ready.

Owens tried to get Perez from Boston last year—Rose says he had suggested it—but the Red Sox wanted one young prospect too many. At the end of the season, Boston didn't exercise its right to renew his contract, and the Phillies called. Perez received a few other offers, but he wanted Philadelphia all along and signed on Jan. 31.

Perez, who got the name Dog back in 1963—"Lee May gave it to me because I looked like a mean, angry, grrr, dog when

continued



Morgan, Mr. Comeback of '82, regained his old form when he sacrificed some pounds.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JAY TITZ

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I started at the pitcher"—did well in a limited role for the Red Sox in '81 and '82, and he's only three seasons removed from a 25-homer, 125-RBI performance. The same rumors follow him that follow Luis Tiant, estimates of his age run as high as 45. He's also a bit overweight at 220, and he's aware of that. "But I know I can still swing the bat," he says. He certainly showed that in the intrasquad game.

Rose is trying to come back from a .271 average in 1982, the second lowest of his career. Morgan believes he can help Rose. "I know Pete as well as I know anybody," says Morgan. "I know when to kick him in the rear, and I know when to put him on the back. People don't think he needs that stuff anymore, but he does." The two of them are like kids rolling around together when they do their calisthenics.

The most frequent suggestion is to how Rose might raise his average—take a break every once in a while—doesn't sit well with him. "I'll rest plenty when I'm dead," he says. "They didn't talk about resting me in '74 when I hit .284 or three years ago when I hit .282 and we won the world championship. I came back and hit .325 the next season. I know I'm the one who hit .271 last year, but it was kind of a luckless year for me. I was up 634 times, and I struck out 32, same as always, so doesn't that tell you something? Pitching was better all around the National League last year, too."

Rose takes so much pride in his ability to play every day that he refuses to use physical excuses. He played the last month and a half of the '82 season on a sore right heel, but all he says is, "What am I supposed to do, sit out the pennant race?"

"You know what bothers me? Air conditioning, that's what. You come in for a rain delay, and the clubhouse is air-conditioned, and your muscles get tight. The tunnels are air-conditioned, everything's air-conditioned. No wonder I get stiff."

Corrales says he's going to have to talk to Rose on the subject of reduced playing time this week. "Somebody's going to have to do it sometime," says Corrales. It had been suggested that maybe Morgan could be a go-between, but Corrales dismissed that notion, saying, "It's my job as the manager to tell him. I'm not going to let somebody do it for me."

Rest or no, Rose is happy to have his

chums back, and they are happy, too. "We're going to have a lot of fun this year," says Perez. Adds Morgan, "This could turn out to be the most enjoyable year of my career. It was great the first time around, but I didn't appreciate it as much as I should have. This time I'll be able to stop and smell the roses."

Another nice thing, says Corrales, is that "the younger players see them on the field, and it just makes it easier for the kids to develop good working habits." Rose has taken a speedy young outfielder named Jeff Stone under his wing, and Stone is beside himself. "Peteey Rose, Hall of Famer," says Stone, one of 15 children from a Portageville, Mo. family. "He's helping me. You have to pinch me. And Joe Morgan came up to me today and said hi."

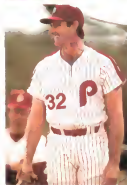
"I like talking to young players," says Rose. "When I came up to the Reds, nobody would associate with me. I was taking Don Blasingame's job. I remember what it was like. It doesn't take nothing to be nice to people."

On the bulletin board of the Phillies' clubhouse, there's a little notice that seems to suggest what Perez, Morgan and Rose can do for the Phillies. It's an advertisement for a firm called Hire-A-Grandpa:

"Our mature, experienced people can help you! Hand-picked and screened, responsible persons are available on a part- or full-time basis. Each is selected for his special skills and experience that make life easier for you. Tell us what kind of help you need and how many hours or days are needed. Some of our specialties are:—"

Among the specialists that are listed are tutors, handymen, maintenance men and gardeners. The Phillie Grandpas should fill the bill.

END



The car moves through the darkness on the Schuylkill Expressway toward the Belmont Avenue ramp, and there's a quiet moment. Then Michael Spinks speaks: "That's where the car came on the highway and hit Sandy. Every time I pass there I try to think what Sandy was thinking and picture what she was doing. I try to think why she didn't see the car. . . ."

"It wasn't until the next day that I went to see her car. They took it to a lot on City Line Avenue. I looked at it and I couldn't take it. I fell down and cried. That was too much."

It's late January, only three weeks after the death of Spinks's common-law wife, Sandra Massey. The ramp, which Spinks passes every day on the way to his workout at Joe Frazier's gym on North Broad Street in Philadelphia, recedes from view. Spinks leaves the expressway, drives along Belmont Avenue and soon comes abreast of West Laurel Hill Cemetery.

"That's where Sandy's grave is," he says. "Right there near the opening in the fence." He pauses. "After the crash, I just wanted to be by myself, to get away. I didn't want to deal with the hurt, but I couldn't make it go away. I wanted to sleep. I'd drink some beer. I'd get stuffed, and I'd keep drinking just to be tired. I wanted to be exhausted to the point where I couldn't keep my eyes open."

In O'Hara's restaurant that night, Spinks is recognized by fellow diners, and some come to his table to shake his hand and talk about boxing or about his brother Leon. The waitress continually stops by to inquire how Michael likes the clam chowder. Two women at an adjacent table ask for an autograph. More people come over to say hello, and they all turn away smiling, which is ironic because Spinks is on the point of crying.

"I try to explain it to my baby all the time," he says, referring to his and Sandra's daughter, Michelle. "I don't think she understands it yet. She's only two. The first time I brought her to the apartment after the crash she looked for Sandy. In the bedroom, there's a picture of Sandy and me in which we're looking at each other out of the corner of our eyes. Michelle saw it and said, 'Who's that? Who's that?'"

"That's mommy, baby. That's daddy."

"Where's mommy?"

"Mommy's gone, babe. Mommy's not with us no more. But mommy left . . . left . . . left you with daddy, and daddy's gonna always be with you, babe. Daddy's gonna always be."

The words turn into a cry that sounds like an air-raid siren, just loud enough to be heard over the disco music blaring in the background. The women at the adjacent table look



A Yawning Gap In His Life



His wife dead, Michael Spinks faces his biggest fight, with tiny Michelle as the special someone in his corner
by **CALVIN FUSSMAN**

While training for his light heavyweight title unification bout with Braxton, Spinks has been Dad—and Mom—to his 2-year-old.

up, quizzically, and then one stares down at her plate. The waitress stops abruptly, pivots and walks in another direction. Spinks sits at the table, his face contorted. He has led a solitary existence for most of his life, but he has never been more alone.

Spinks has been haunted by experiences beyond his control for most of his 26 years, dating back to his childhood in a St. Louis ghetto. In 1978 he was showered by the fallout from Leon's bizarre ascent to and descent from the heavyweight championship, and now there is the automobile crash that killed his wife. Ever since he first went to a gym to give boxing a try, at age 13, Spinks has found refuge in the ring, where he's able to dictate his own fate. On March 18 in Atlantic City's Convention Hall, Spinks, the WBA light-heavyweight champion, will face his greatest challenge. He'll fight Dwight Braxton, the WBC champ, in a title unification bout that promises to be as interesting as the contrasting physiques and styles of the principals. Spinks is 6' 2½" and has a classic, stand-up style, while Braxton is a 5' 6¾" pit bull of a man who has promised to pound Spinks with his straight-ahead, crablike style.

"I don't know what an average person goes through in a lifetime," Spinks says, "but I've been through a lot up to now—and I have lived life as cautiously as I possibly can. My life hasn't been a bowl of cherries."

What once was a festering sore is now a scar. The former site of the Pruitt-Igoue housing project on the north side of St. Louis is now a vacant lot littered with weeds, gaunt trees, ragged furniture and bald tires. By 1976, roughly two decades after the complex was hailed as an architectural masterpiece, the Federal Government dispersed the remaining 2,000 of what had been 12,000 inhabitants, brought in a demolition crew and leveled it.

"You want to know what it was like living in Pruitt-Igoue?" asks Leland Spinks, 20, one of Michael's five brothers. "On New Year's Eve you'd turn out the lights, pull down the shades and get down on the floor—and if you lived to see another day, you were very thankful." On one New Year's Eve, Leon stood up to pull down the shades and a bullet blasted through the window, narrowly missing him, and then ricocheted around the room.

"There'd be shooting just about every day and every night," says Don (Pelo) Carbin, one of Michael's friends. "You'd be standing on the corner and someone would get their head blown off a few yards away. I always felt I was lucky it wasn't me. But Mike didn't have it as bad coming up as Leon. Everyone picked on Leon. Leon would fight one person and a thousand others would jump in. The best thing

continued

he could do was try to make it to his house."

Michael walked the streets with his neck swiveling and his eyeballs darting, always watching his back. A sensitive child, he was lost in Pruitt-Igoe. He joined a gang at an early age, but quit when he refused to fight a fellow member, as he was instructed. Occasionally he was beaten up on the streets; more often he was taunted and chased home. "They used to call us the ugly Spinks family," Michael says. "For a long time I hated the name Spinks." He was always tall for his age and that contributed to his awkwardness, which was another source of his insecurity.

Leon Sr., who is a sign painter, left home when Michael was four, and Kay Spinks took various jobs to support her seven children. A deeply religious woman, she spoon-fed them the Bible, but still there was hunger. Michael would scoop into the wishing wells near the St. Louis Gateway Arch for change or shoplift clothing from department stores and sell the items to buy food. "I can remember eating out of the incinerator," Michael says. "Me and my sister found a piece of cornbread. It was perfect, not stepped on or nothing. We went upstairs, put a little water on it. Salt and pepper. Put it in the oven. Then we spread on some peanut butter and shared it."

Boxing was a means of survival—physical for Leon and psychological for Michael. In 1969 Leon started working



Spinks was golden in the '76 Games at 165 pounds.

out at a neighborhood recreation center called the Capri, and the street beatings ceased when word of his fistie prowess spread. "I kept calling Mike a sissy," Leon says, "and soon he followed me."

"I remember being in the ring for the first time," Michael says. "Leon was hitting me and I was crying. I said, 'You're my brother.' He kept on hitting me. Then I hit back, and pretty soon I was putting

mouses under his eyes." Michael's self-esteem grew with each workout. When trying on clothes in a store, he'd pose in front of a mirror, fists clenched in a boxing stance.

Michael emerged as the man of the household. Leon, though three years older, was wild even then. The younger brothers, Leland, Kenneth, Evan and Eddie, and their sister, Karen, also looked up to Michael. He sold newspapers on a street corner, and as his business prospered he found corners for Leland and Kenneth. All the while, he was maturing in the ring under the guidance of Jim Merrill, who coached boxing at the Capri. After cleaning up on the local competition, Michael started making out-of-town trips.

"If you lost in the tournaments, you had to go home," says Claudell Atkins, a friend of Michael's who fought at 106 pounds. "We didn't like to go home because every day on the road they gave us five dollars to eat. We'd just put the five in our pockets. If you kept winning, them fives were adding up."

In 1976 the U.S. was preparing for the Olympics by sending fighters abroad for international seasoning. In January of that year, Michael, then 19, confronted the Soviet champion at 165 pounds, Ruffat Riskiev, in Tashkent. "That Russian knocked me flat on my back," Michael says. "All I know is I woke up and I was sitting down. I saw my team in the corner, and the guys were saying, 'Get up!' The count went to five . . . six . . . seven. I got on up. I stayed low and he was hooking me. It felt like I had a big hole in my chest." Riskiev won a decision. "My mouth was sore and my teeth were loose," Michael says. "I couldn't eat for about two weeks."

In the spring of '76, the leading St. Louis contenders for the Olympic boxing team were thought to be Carbin, a 156-pounder, and Atkins. But Atkins got married and cut down on training, and Carbin fought only when inspired. The Trials were held in June in Cincinnati, and as Atkins and Carbin faded, the Spinks blossomed. Michael, who in the preceding months had trained in the afternoon and washed dishes at a hotel at night, decisioned Navy champion Keith Broome in the 165-pound division to win

continued

In 1981 he became the WBA light heavy champion by beating Eddie Mustafa Muhammad.



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the Trials and join 178-pound Leon, then a Marine stationed at Camp LeJeune, N.C., on the U.S. team.

"When I got to Montreal, every time I thought of Riskiev I did 10 pushups," says Spinks, who drew a bye, won two forfeits and beat Ryszard Pasiewicz of Poland before meeting Riskiev in the finals. In the second round, an overhand right, later to be known as The Spinks Jinx, floored Riskiev. In the third, after a series of jarring body shots, the Soviet fighter bent over as if he'd been hit low. The referee awarded the fight to Michael, and Leon later knocked out Sixto Seria of Cuba to give the U.S. team its fifth gold medal; the others went to Ray Leonard, Howard Davis and Leo Randolph. The brothers Spinks returned home to a parade through downtown St. Louis. "My sister said, 'Mike, you're both celebrities now,'" Michael says. "What's that?" I said. "Celebrity?" I didn't know nothing about all that."

But a hard-nosed Philadelphian named Butch Lewis did, and he went after the Spinks brothers with the same hard sell he had employed as a used-car dealer in Chester, Pa. In May of '76 Lewis had promoted the Muhammad Ali-Richard Dunn fight in Munich. He was working for promoter Bob Arum then, but when he signed Leon and Michael, he put them under his own promotional wing.

The brothers stayed at Lewis' home in Wilmington, Del. before settling in Philadelphia, which is the best place for a fighter in an upper weight class to hone his skills. The City of Brotherly Love indeed. Sparring sessions are wars, and the beaten are often referred to as "dog-meat." Everyone, including future champions Matthew Saad Muhammad and Braxton, went after a piece of Michael in the gym. Meanwhile, Leon—after defeating the likes of Pedro Agosto and Alfio Righetti and fighting a draw with Scott LeDoux—took his 6-0-1 record to Las Vegas in February 1978 for a title fight with a 36-year-old, ill-prepared Ali.

Leon, a prohibitive underdog, won on a split decision. While the new champ was carried around the Las Vegas ring, flashing his 7-10 bowling-split grin, Michael was in the midst of the celebration, weeping. Perhaps he had a premonition of what lay ahead. Leon turned his finances over to Detroit attorneys Ed Bell and Lester Hudson, and he left both Michael and Philadelphia.



In 1978, Leon didn't break Gerrie Coetzee or the bank at Monte Carlo, but he smiled on. Now he's just a fading cruiserweight.

"When Leon won the title," Michael says, "he turned into a huge piggy bank and everybody tried to get inside. Leon became a different person in Detroit. Flamboyant clothes. Big diamond rings. He was convinced that this was the way a champion was supposed to look."

"I was always the one who could talk to Leon. I loved Leon. I cared for him." But now, when Michael phoned his brother, he was told that Leon wasn't at home. "One day he was back in Philadelphia," Michael says. "All the bums were leeching on him. I told him how these guys didn't mean no good. He said to me, 'That's deep.' And I kicked him. His face wrinkled up, and he was getting ready to hit me. I said, 'Here I am telling you something for your own good and you want to beat me up. Go ahead, but don't ever say nothing like that to me.' Then we both broke down and cried."

The people in Leon's camp told Michael he had no right to meddle in Leon's affairs. When Leon was preparing for his September 1978 rematch with Ali, the brothers had an argument and Michael was kicked out of the gym. Leon skipped rope with tears sliding down his face.

"People just led me the wrong way," Leon says today. "I had a hard time steering my life. But no matter what happened, I've always loved Michael."

On the night of the rematch in the Louisiana Superdome, the scene in Leon's corner was chaotic. Hangers-on screamed instructions, and part-time trainer George Benton, who couldn't get a word in, stormed away after the fifth



round. In the glare of the spotlight that follows any heavyweight champion, Leon had come to be a car-crashing caricature for the nation to laugh at. Now, after he lost on a decision to Ali, the spotlight moved on (Last Sunday, when Leon lost badly to former WBC cruiserweight champion Carlos De Leon, he seemed very near the end of his career.)

"There was a time when people would come up to Mike and make fun of Leon," Lewis says. "Everybody had a Leon

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Spinks joke. Mike would want to punch those people in the mouth. He was confused. He wasn't sure if that's what happened when you became champion or if Leon was bringing it on himself."

Michael's confusion led to inactivity. By then he had a 7-0 pro record, but was too busy worrying about and chasing after Leon to train. He fought only twice in the two years after Leon won the title. His life was further complicated by a knee injury, and it was fortunate that during this slack time he could confide in Sandra Massey, a part-time model and dance instructor in Philadelphia whom he'd met through Leon.

"Everybody needs somebody, and I didn't have nobody after Leon left Philadelphia," Michael says. "I had to stumble around with a big splint on my leg. So Sandy and I had time together. We wound up earning more and more for each other. Sandy showed me things that nobody had ever shown me. Her love. Her care. Her warmth. She was my first and only love. It was pure and golden."

His relationship with Sandy and his return to the ring in February 1980 relaxed Spinks. He won five bouts that year and looked on in awe and amazement as his daughter, Michelle, came into the world in Philadelphia's Booth Maternity Center on Dec. 3.

Spinks and Braxton became well-acquainted in 1980, when Braxton, a former inmate at Rahway (N.J.) State Prison who had yet to develop a reputation, was hired in July as a sparring partner. Spinks says he loaned Braxton \$45 to buy a radio and that the debt has remained unpaid for two years. Although the two have milked this angle at press conferences to hype the title unification fight—"I'll send you the money in a first-round kit," Braxton sneers—they express respect for each other in private.

There can be no disputing Spinks's punching power. It's one thing for a boxer to have one devastating punch, but very rare for him to have knockout potential in almost every punch he throws, which is what elevates Spinks to champi-

on class. He used a left hook to KO Marvin Johnson on March 28, 1981. When he finally got his shot at the WBA crown on July 18, 1981, he knocked down Eddie Mustafa Muhammad with an overhand right and won the title on a unanimous decision. In subsequent bouts, he used a straight right to flatten Vonzell Johnson and a right uppercut to topple Jerry Celestine. While Spinks (22-0, 16 knockouts) is the heavier hitter, Braxton (19-1-1, 12 knockouts) relies



Spinks's night life consists of workouts along the Schuylkill River

on the cumulative effects of his punches.

Braxton, the shortest light-heavyweight champion ever, comes forward in a crouch, his thick arms and shoulders serving as a protective shell, and it is difficult to hit him cleanly. Spinks's lanky frame makes it hard to get inside to hit him. Braxton is a relentless mauler who will try to control the pace of the fight early. Spinks is content to wait for the appropriate time to strike.

"I will stand up to Braxton from the start," Spinks says.

"I'll roll out the red carpet for Michael to come down the stretch," Braxton counters. "Only the carpet will be made of his blood."

Conditioning probably will be a significant factor in this 15-round bout, and many experts wonder if Spinks has been able to train effectively in view of his troubled winter. On the night of Jan. 5, a

car in which he was a passenger was stopped by the Philadelphia police. "We saw the flashing lights and we turned off the street," says Leland, who was with Michael at the time. "We didn't think the lights were meant for us. Before we knew it, they were following us and there was another [police] car coming toward us. They jumped on us. They said, 'Get out or we'll blow your heads off.'" A search of the car revealed a .45-caliber revolver, which had been a gift to Michael from a friend and which, shades of Pruitt-Igoe, he had taken out of his house five nights earlier so he could fire off several celebratory New Year's Eve rounds.

Spinks was charged with possession of an unlicensed weapon (which had been reported stolen) and was released on \$1,000 bond a few hours later; the trial date was set for April 4. The incident sparked Leon-like newspaper headlines. Like brother, like brother. Two nights later, Sandy died in the crash on the Schuylkill Expressway.

It's nearing midnight as Michael Spinks runs through a drizzle on the soggy grass on the bank of the Schuylkill River. The gray cloud cover somehow gives the night a look more gloomy than it

would have if it were completely black. "I love to run out here," he says. "Me and my lady used to run here all the time. It's real nice in the summer. There are a lot of geese in the water, and there are families with laughing kids, and—you see over there, over where that row of cars is parked?—that's where the teenagers go to kiss. Yeah, it was fun."

His breath visible in the cold, he ducks under leafless tree branches, stops at a chin-up bar to lift himself a few times and then continues, throwing uppercuts as he runs. "I've been so frustrated and upset," he says. "This fight will be my way of letting all the steam off. I'm going to take everything out on that man, as if Braxton were to blame for everything that has happened to me since January 1."

The uppercuts come faster as his stride lengthens, and he runs off into the foggy darkness, all alone.

END



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8
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER IOOSS JR.

Since 1948, Dodgers of every stripe have convened at this crossroads in the Florida sunshine, minor- and major-leaguers studying together at Branch Rickey's "college of baseball"

BY WILLIAM NACK

CONTINUED



Holman Stadium: The big club's spring park becomes the Class A Dodgers' summer home.

I learned a whole heck of a lot about baseball at Dodgermania, mostly because of the way they taught it. You always had the spirit of the man down there: Branch Rickey. Those that followed him passed it on down. Everybody was aware of Branch Rickey, because they never let his spirit die around there. They always said, Mister Rickey did this and Mister Rickey said that. And it's still going on, it's still lasting. Those things never die.

—WILHELM DAVIS
Former Los Angeles Dodger

On a beautiful day in Vero Beach, Fla., last spring, with the sun hanging high in the belltower of an early afternoon, the black man stopped his wheelchair between home plate and the mound on Field 2, facing the mound.

The spirit of the past is always right around a corner at Dodgermania, and the way you get to Field 2 is this. You can enter Dodgermania by turning off Vero Beach's 26th Street onto Duke Snider Road and then take a left on Van Scully Way, which runs right past the field along the leftfield line. Or you can turn in at the main gate, onto Jackie Robinson Avenue. Then you head straight for a hundred yards or so. Don't turn left (what else?) on Sandy Koufax Lane, because that breaks like a good curve past the villas—small, one-bedroom, one-bathroom structures where most of the players live, two to a unit. Keep going until you get to Roy Campanella Drive. Take a right and, if you're on foot, walk straight on, through the gap in the fence and over to the pitcher's mound, until you reach Roy Campanella.

Campanella, a Dodger instructor these days, among other things, was sitting in his wheelchair and addressing a dozen or so fresh-faced young catchers, most of them minor-leaguers, teaching and explaining in a voice clear and deliberate.

"And another thing," Campy was saying. "You have to give a pitcher confidence that if he bounces the ball in the dirt, you can get in front of it and block it. Any pitcher who can keep the ball down low is a better pitcher. When he starts bringing the ball up, he's going to get hit much harder. If one gets away, the pitcher depends on you to block it—not catch it, just block it—and keep the ball in front of you. If the runner sees the ball in front of you, he'll never run."

The Dodgers have trained at this site every year since 1948, when Rickey, then

a co-owner of the team, first summoned almost 600 players to Vero Beach to chase fly balls, avoid the alligators, stay sober and attend church on Good Friday. The late Mister Rickey, as all who knew him still unfailingly refer to him, left the Dodgers after a power struggle with co-owner Walter O'Malley in 1950, but what he created and left behind is as immutable in these parts as the color of the orange.

He set out to create a "college of baseball"—in fact, in a 1948 Dodgertown field-operation log the place is called the Brooklyn Dodgers School of Instruction Camp—and he did precisely that. Rickey had been a catcher in his playing days, and one of his star pupils that first year was Campanella, a minor-leaguer about to join the Dodgers. "If Mister Rickey could only have caught like he could talk about it!" Campanella says. What Rickey talked about is what Campanella still talks about today. So there was a continuum at work on Field 2 that day, a tradition of teaching a catcher a certain way of catching. After 34 years, the same school was still in session.

The students listened raptly as Campanella made points and spun yarns. One illustrated the value and proper use of the pinchout. There was the day, he recalled, when he was catching Preacher Roe, who had excellent control, in a close game against the New York Giants. Willie Mays was on first, and Campanella called for three straight pinchouts before he ever asked Roe to throw a strike.

"I knew that Mays was going to run," Campanella told them, "and that out was very important. And I had the confidence I was going to throw him out. This comes from practice and from believing in yourself. I just knew in a close game that Mays would try to steal. I called for three pinchouts, and I got him on the third one. I knew I could put Roe in a hole like that because I knew he could get the ball over. You have to pick your pitcher to do this with. Know your pitchers and believe in yourself!"

Campanella's sermon on the mound that day covered familiar ground, but there's much about the Dodgertown of 1950 that no longer exists. And there has been a lot added since Rickey departed. The place has always been unique—it was, for instance, the first major league training facility in which both major and minor league clubs trained together—but now it's a real oddity, a kind of full-time, 450-acre country club that, *continued*



For farmhands, there's campfire camaraderie; for pitcher Bob Welch, there's poolside solitude; for a couple of tourists, there's intimacy in sneaking a peek into the Dodgertown bus.



incidentally, also happens to be the home of the Dodgers six weeks a year.

"Today," says Dodgertown's managing director, Charlie Blaney, "we're in..." He ticks off a list:

"The citrus business." Seventy acres are planted in orange and grapefruit trees. "They make an attractive border for Dodgertown," Blaney says, "and one of Mister O'Malley's hobbies was horticulture." The groves yield 6,000 to 8,000 boxes of fruit a year for the marketplace.

"The conference-center business." Since 1977, Harrison Conference Services has managed a program for firms wanting to hold meetings at Dodgertown. The facilities include 90 villas on Sandy Koufax Lane and Jackie Robinson Avenue, and some 200 corporations have made use of them, including IBM, GE and Memorex.

"The golf business." In part because blacks then had to drive 15 miles to Fort Pierce to play on public courses, O'Malley built a nine-hole course at Dodgertown in 1966. He added an 18-hole layout across the street six years later and called it Dodger Pines Country Club. Both courses are within walking distance of the villas.

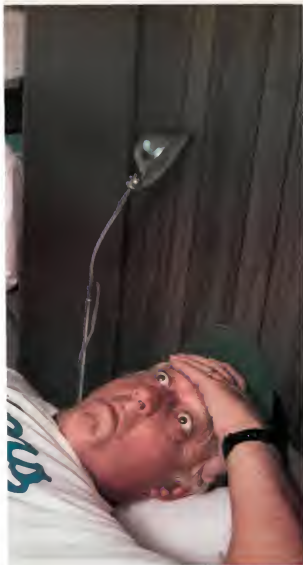
"The football training business." Since 1974, the New Orleans Saints have used Dodgertown as a preseason training camp, spending six to seven weeks there, and for the last three years the Buffalo Bills have escaped Niagara Frontier winters to train at Dodgertown for late-season and playoff games.

"The residential development business." In 1972 the Dodgers built 45 houses adjacent to Dodger Pines to form a retirement community known as Safari Pines Estate and then sold them for \$15,000 to \$25,000 apiece. The houses are now worth \$40,000 to \$50,000 each.

"The restaurant business." The Great American Pastime Dining Establishment, in which waitresses wear Dodger uniforms, each bearing the name and number of a former hero—SNIDER, PODRES, KOUFAX, HODGES—serves lunch, an evening buffet and nostalgia. As in most of the nooks and corridors of Dodgertown, large black and white photographs of men playing baseball line the restaurant walls. "Joe Garagiola gets flattened as Carl Furillo scores," reads the caption on one.

In the restaurant lobby, a baseball treasure hangs in a glass frame with a





The Dodgertown infirmary staff knows that Lasorda really does bleed Dodger blue.

caption reading: "On September 24, 1957, this home plate was used for the last time at Ebbets Field, Brooklyn won, 2-0, over the Pittsburgh Pirates. It was a five-hit shutout for Dodger pitcher Danny McDevitt. Final run was scored by Gino Cimeli, driven in by Gil Hodges."

And, "The baseball business." Dodgertown is the most elaborate facility of its kind in the major leagues, and certainly much of its uniqueness derives from what it offers the players, on and off the field. There are two basketball courts, an Olympic-sized pool, six tennis courts (four lighted), two shuffleboard courts and nightly flicks at a movie theater, as well as a darkroom and a studio from which the Dodger radio network broadcasts a nightly three-hour call-in show.

For strictly baseball purposes, there are 2½ practice fields, eight batting cages, four pitcher's mounds, a sliding pit and 5,000-seat Holman Stadium, where the Dodgers play spring games and the Class A Vero Beach Dodgers play their home schedule.

There's also an area right outside the home clubhouse where the pitchers practice control. It's called The Strings because of the pieces of twine tied together to frame the shape of the strike zone at each of the four home plates. Rickey would be right at home here, because it was he who had The Strings set up many years ago, and he spent most of his outdoor working time at Dodgertown in this area. "When it comes to pitching," he used to say, "I know my onions."

When it came to training camps, he knew 'em, too. One day late in 1947, the season in which Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in baseball, a prominent Vero Beach businessman named Bud Holman, for whom the Dodgertown stadium would later be named, suggested to Rickey that the Dodgers transfer spring training operations from Pensacola to a disused Naval training base 500 miles away at Vero Beach. During World War II the 80-acre base had served as a center for training divebomber pilots to fly night missions; they made endless strafing and bombing runs over nearby Blue Cypress Lake. After the war the U.S. government deeded the facility to the city of Vero Beach.

Red Barber, the Dodgers' radio announcer in those days, recalls that Rickey had already used the U.S. Naval Air Station at Pensacola as a "minor league factory" and that that experience certainly kindled his interest in Vero *continued*



Waitresses at The Great American Pastime Dining Establishment wear the names and numbers of Dodger immortals. Here the real No. 32—Koutafis—makes his annual appearance.

Beach. "Mister Rickey was always ahead of the parade," Barber says. "A very brilliant man."

Rickey dispatched one of his rising young organizational lights, Buzzie Bavasi, to evaluate the Vero Beach facility. Stepping off the train, Bavasi was stunned: "I thought, 'Oh, my goodness!' It was a town of about 4,000 people. I couldn't understand why Mister Rickey wanted to come down here. Then we went out to the base. It was rather dilapidated, and it was abandoned. Windows were broken. Woods were all over the place. But it was all flatland, and you could see the possibilities. There were 18 apartments, single-story, one-, two- and three-bedroom, on a site adjacent to the base, and I thought, 'Those could be good for our staff.'"

That evening, in Holman's tow, Bavasi met the town fathers, who asked for \$20,000 a year in rent. The Dodgers were scratching financially in those days, and Bavasi countered with an offer of "a dollar a year for 20 years." Holman had envisioned the Dodgers as a lure for tourism. Bavasi pointed out that 13 sportswriters traveled with the Dodgers and "they will have a Vero Beach dateline every day." After considerable dickering, town officials finally agreed: a dollar a year for 20 years. The tab for the apartments, which the Dodgers would rent for front-office people, was set at \$75 a month for a one-bedroom, \$100 for a two-bedroom and \$125 for a three-bedroom.

In his three years at Vero, Rickey would make an indelible mark on spring training. By 1949 he not only had all his players in one spring training camp, unheard of at the time, but he also had them organized on the field like Marine recruits at Parris Island.

A total of 581 baseball players passed through Dodgertown in 1948, of which 477 were minor-leaguers: 61 catchers, 206 pitchers, 96 infielders, 28 first basemen and 86 outfielders. During that first spring the Dodgers themselves and the Triple-A Montreal Royals, as well as 38 free agents, stopped by briefly on their way back from training in the Dominican Republic. Just about everyone except Manager Leo Durocher and his wife, actress Laraine Day, stayed in two large barracks. Leo reported that Laraine could not abide the wire coat hangers, so they moved into a hotel that had wooden ones.

In those early years Rickey, the silver-

tongued orator, began each day with a lecture on the fundamentals of the game. Actor Chuck Connors, then a minor league first baseman, recalls Rickey talking one morning about how to take a lead off first base. "Not the break," Connors recalls, "just the lead. He could hold you spellbound. Articulate, poetic, brilliant, compelling."

On the field there were so many players running around that each one not only wore a number, but the numbers were of different colors—orange, maroon, yellow, purple, black, green, blue, brown, white and red—so one No. 46 could be distinguished from another. Players rotated from one skill area to the next: bunting, exciting run-downs, sliding, hitting, stealing. "Every half-hour they'd blow a whistle and you'd change," says Guy Wellman, a minor-leaguer then and now a scout for the Dodgers. The managers were easily discernible. "We thought that was pretty funny. All the managers ran around in white satin uniforms," Wellman says.

And there, presiding at The Strings, wearing a bow tie and a felt hat, holding a cigar and dictating notes ceaselessly to his secretary, was Rickey. He really did know his onions. One after another, pitchers came to perform for him. Al Campanis, now the Dodger general manager, then a minor league instructor, recalls Rickey watching a different pitcher at The Strings every 15 minutes. He called every player "young man."

"This young man's fastball," Rickey would say as his secretary scribbled furiously, "moves on a northeast axis. He has excellent rotation. His curve ball has good deflection on a straight downward rotation, and he has passed the aptitude test with flying colors. This young man will be pitching in the big leagues in two years."

Wellman, a catcher, used to work with the pitchers at The Strings, and he recalls Rickey setting a pith helmet on the plate and offering about \$5 to anyone who could hit it with a changeup. "To see if a pitcher could keep the change down," Wellman says. "He was trying to get them to keep it low. That's the only way a change is effective, down low."

Rickey may have been baseball's all-time champion of marriage and drinking's all-time enemy. "Are you nervous, young man?" he asked a young pitcher one day.

"A little, Mister Rickey," said the lad.
"Do you drink?"

continued



Powder rooms have hokey names in Dodgertown, but they don't kid about either Duke.



Fernando Valenzuela is no Alton or Wills with the stick, but give the kid some time.

"No. . . ."

"Beer?"

"Ahhh, yes."

"Do you have a girl friend?"

"Yes, Mister Rickey."

Then, gruffly, "Do you love her?"

"Yes."

"Why don't you marry her?"

Invariably the reason for continued bachelorhood was a lack of funds. So more than once, Campanis says, Rickey would give a young player \$500 to get hitched.

Sometimes it was as if Rickey were putting those kids on a couch. "Is there a lot of love in your home?" he once asked a young Tommy Lasorda, while Lasorda was pitching before Rickey in practice. Lasorda was being sent to the International League. And then, "Does your father drink? Does your mother?" After the workout, and after answering a series of what he considered—and still considers—bewildering questions, Lasorda said to Rickey, "From what you've seen, do you think I can pitch successfully in the International League?"

"If you don't, I will be up there to investigate," Rickey said.

For a young catcher like Campanella, who had spent most of his career in the Negro leagues, the Dodgertown facilities and Rickey's emphasis on fundamentals were exhilarating. "I'd never seen anything like this," he says. "I never knew what a sliding pit was. To learn how to slide? Batting cages to hit a ball off a batting tee? Never did see one before. This was the first time I'd ever hit against a pitching machine. I was getting grounded in the basics that the Dodgers always practiced—of throwing the ball to the right base, of learning how to take a lead off first. And there were exercises before you started every day. This was a new challenge to me. This helped me to develop into the player I became."

It was no wonder the Dodgers became known for producing the most fundamentally sound players in the game. Talent varied, of course, but insofar as they could, the players in the Dodger system, from the parent team to the lowest club in the organization, executed in the same way. They all learned together at the same school.

"Dodgertown was like an automobile plant," says Bavasi, now general manager of the California Angels, "only it was designed to make and develop players. It





Minor-leaguers prepare to sharpen their strokes in three of the eight batting cages.

also developed managers: Walt Alston, Dick Williams, Preston Gomez, Tommy Lasorda, Bobby Cox, Don Zimmer, Clyde King, Bobby Bragan, Gene Mauch, Sparky Anderson, Billy Humer, Gil Hodges, Danny Ozark, Roger Craig, Maury Wills, Frank Howard, Eddie Stanky, Jeff Torborg . . . "

Besides teaching fundamentals, Dodgertown gave coaches a chance to evaluate all the talent in the system, and to determine which players to sell off as excess. Toward the end of camp the staff would meet every night after dinner, often until well past midnight, moving players around. "They talked about the potential of each ballplayer and where he could play," Alston, a minor league manager then, recalls.

"In those early years we would sell enough ballplayers each spring to make ends meet at Dodgertown," says Bavasi, who served as the Dodgers' general manager from 1951 to 1968.

It was Rickey who said, "Luck is the residue of design," and at Dodgertown nothing has been done except by design. The residue, accumulated over the last 35 years, adds up to these ineluctable facts: The Dodgers have won more pennants (13) and more World Series (5) than any other team in the National League.

The design shaped by Rickey at Vero extended far beyond the ABCs of pitching and hitting. "Mister Rickey felt that players should know each other like they know their families," Bavasi says, "that they should get to know each other's habits, each other's strengths and weaknesses. He felt if they knew these things, they could play better together."

Thus, a communal life-style emerged at Dodgertown, and with it a body of lore unique among American sports franchises. In 1951 Pitcher Johnny Podres was standing around during his first day in camp when suddenly a meeting-room door burst open and 600 players charged past him onto the field. "They come flyin' out of there," Podres recalls. "I said to myself, 'How the hell am I ever going to make the big leagues?'"

Until the mid-1960s, when a good many players were earning enough money to rent housing off base, most of the major-leaguers lived in those two big barracks, shared the latrines and ate en masse in a mess hall that was also a Navy leftover. The chow line used to snake out the door and stretch across the street. Players ate off steel trays, Campanella recalls. TAKE ALL YOU WANT, covered



Fans of all ages enjoy the rites of spring, whether they're taking b.p. or just looking on, as Bess Lockhart, 82, of Cusseta, Ga. has been doing for 18 years.



BUT EAT ALL YOU TAKE, cautioned a sign on the mess-hall walls.

After dinner, says Don Drysdale, many of the players gathered in the main lobby of one of the barracks around a Baldwin piano and two large oak tables and talked baseball. Pinball machines snapped, a jukebox played, Willie Davis has vivid recollections of Alston and Maury Wills, two mean sticks, playing pool in an adjoining room. A huge copper bowl filled with oranges sat on the floor. The oranges were among the few that escaped Beanie Kunz, an old man whose sole job was to squeeze oranges and grapefruit for the players. The juice was set out all over the camp in giant drums and Lister bags, and on hot days the air above the drums shimmered like that above oases.

The wooden barracks could be stifling on a hot day, frigid at night. When the temperature plunged, players slept under their mattresses or in their overcoats. "You had to get out of bed and walk down the hall to the latrine," Lasorda says. "The floor was cold. You wouldn't want to go because it was so cold." Manager Charlie Dressen once bought 13 electric floor heaters, and on cold nights fuses popped like flashbulbs. Men stumbled about in the dark, stubbing their toes and cursing.

Podres can still hear the rain leaking into the barracks: "They put the big garbage cans in there when it rained." When it was dry the barracks were potential tinderboxes. One evening the fuses blew during a violent electrical storm, and, fearing lightning would turn the barracks into cinders, Minor League Director Fresno Thompson bellowed to staffer Bill DeLury, "Make sure everyone's down in the lobby!" DeLury looked up the staircase to the second floor and saw, reflected on the wall, a brilliant orange flame. He dashed up the stairs and swept into the glowing room. A mound of paper was blazing in the sink, flames lapping up the walls, and there was "one of our phenoms," DeLury says, lying back with his legs crossed and reading a newspaper by the light of his fire.

The hour of curfew, midnight for major leaguers, somewhat earlier for minor leaguers, caused another type of hot time at Dodgertown. Scouts and instructors, enforcers of the curfew, raced madly through the dark. "It was like an escape from Alcatraz," says Drysdale. "You'd look out the window, and there were flashlights shining and coaches yelling

"Stop! Stop! I know who you are!" They'd find guys hiding, even in orange trees. It was unbelievable."

Then there was the afternoon when Drysdale, stopping at the drawbridge over Indian River, saw a man standing up in a rowboat. He was holding out his jacket like a matador brandishing a cape. As the boat drifted past, Drysdale saw that the man was Podres. He yelled to him, "Hey, John, meet us at the Tahitian!" When Podres walked into the bar a while later, Drysdale asked what he'd been doing.

"What the hell do you think I was doing?" said Podres. "I sheared a pin in the engine, and I was making a sail trying to get back!"

Podres was one of many Dodger-townsmen who fished the river and the ocean, but the best fish story of all happened right at camp. In 1953 O'Malley stocked the heart-shaped pond 250 feet off third base at Holman Stadium with largemouth bass. In years of fishing the pond for a certain large bass Wills had hooked his prey more than once but always lost it. One afternoon, after playing the first few innings of an exhibition game, Wills fetched his pole from the clubhouse and returned to the pond. Behind him, the game went on.

He was casting with live perch as bait when the beast struck. Wills was in a fight. The bass broke water. One fan, seeing Wills battling the fish, left the stands and went to the pond to watch him. Soon other fans joined him along the shore. They urged Wills on with loud cries. "Give him a little line!" one cried.

"Keep the rod up, Maury!" yelled another.

"Don't rush him!" someone called. "Keep the line tight!"

Minutes later, to rousing cheers, Wills banked an eight-pound largemouth. "I felt like the Old Man and the Sea," says Wills.

"The camaraderie we had was an awful lot of fun," Drysdale says. "You got to know everybody's little mannerisms. When I first went there, they made me feel like I'd been around for 10 years. The way they helped me, I felt I belonged."

As Rickey intended it, Dodgertown became a baseball camp in which the players mixed and fed each other baseball, where the minor-leaguers could see how the big-leaguers played, acted, lived, behaved. A young player could develop by osmosis.

Much has changed at Dod- continued



Paul Voigt is a long-range Dodger pitching prospect, while Candy Maldonado, a 22-year-old outfielder, is a bright and shining light right now.





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gertown during the last 10 years, since they tore down both sets of barracks and more big-leaguers began to move off base. But even today's young players sense, as Drysdale once did, a feeling of togetherness in the camp. "That's the first thing I noticed," says Outfielder Mike Marshall, 23. "They try to make you feel a part. When I first came here I was 19 years old, in A ball, and I felt like I was a Dodger. You get with these guys and it makes you think, 'I don't want to be anywhere else but the major leagues.'"

This is yet more residue from the original design. "The best ballplayer is the hungry ballplayer," Rickey used to say. No one knows better than Wills how keen that hunger can be. Of the original two barracks, one was for Dodgers and high minor-leaguers, generally two to a room; the other was for the rest of the players in the organization, who lived three or four to a room. During Wills's 8½ years in the minors, he was never more than Pitcher Joe Black's visitor in the big league quarters. "I used to go over and sit on his bed while he wrote letters," Wills recalls. "Just looking around—feeling the aura of being in those barracks—was a thrill. It gave me something to shoot for."

In those days—the mid-'50s—Vero Beach was a small Southern town whose racial attitudes mirrored those of the region. Some observers have suggested that Rickey's decision to found Dodgertown was based in part on his desire to fully integrate the game. Robinson was already on the Dodgers, and Campanella and Pitcher Don Newcombe were ready to join the team. The idea of Dodgertown as a multiracial enclave, where black and white players could eat, train and sleep in one place, certainly had its appeal.

The conditions were explosive, and in 1948 they nearly blew up in Rickey's face. Newcombe had a confrontation with an opposing player, a white man, after a game in Vero Beach, and white fans descended from the stands to challenge Newk. "Here was a nigger going to fight a white man in Vero Beach in 1948," Newcombe recalls. "One man tore a picket off a fence and yelled, 'Kill that nigger! Kill that nigger!' They were going to lynch me." Newcombe escaped unscathed—physically, that is—but in the middle of that night Rickey had a meeting with the mayor and the chief of po-

lice. In an attempt to minimize the possibility of further conflict, Rickey asked Newcombe, Robinson and Campanella to stay on the base for the rest of spring training.

His memory of life at Dodgertown, a prison for him, still troubles Newcombe when he visits the place. "It's haunting, it really is," he says. "It was a lousy cracker town at the time. It's changed since then. That's what to me makes America great. I've lived to see it change."

Change came slowly to Vero, as it did elsewhere in the South. Tommy Davis recalls Holman Stadium's washrooms being integrated in 1964, and he also remembers urging reluctant black patrons to move from seats in rightfield to better ones in previously all-white sections behind home plate. "We almost had to push them," he says. "Get up! Everything's O.K. now." It was not until the mid-1960s that the town's stores and theater served blacks.

O'Malley, meanwhile, tried to accommodate his black players as best he could. The golf course came in '65, and when outfielder Lou Johnson was evicted from a laundromat one year, O'Malley had washers and driers installed at Dodgertown.

Over the years O'Malley added this touch and that, and by the time he died 3½ years ago, he had made Dodgertown a garden spot. Nine royal palms stand just inside the gravelly bank that delineates the outfield boundary of Holman Stadium, and a 120-foot-high dark green stand of Australian pines serves as a backdrop for the hitters. There are banyan trees and kumquat trees and even a flowering African orchid tree outside the mess, or, dining hall.

What Rickey originally conceived, the idea of a baseball college, O'Malley carried out and improved on. "We have fulfilled Mister Rickey's dream," Campanella says.

And then some. Several years after Drysdale retired, he visited O'Malley in his office in Los Angeles. "Boy, you retired too soon," O'Malley told him. "We've got Dodgertown all fixed up."

"I hear it's very nice," Drysdale said. "But we had an awful lot of fun in the old hurracks. You could tell stories about those things for days and days. I understand it's a country club now."

"That's what I'm afraid of," O'Malley said. "When you really stop and think about it, those old hurracks weren't so bad after all, were they?"

END
59

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Foster helped UAB get the right breaks

damn hyphen," says UAB Assistant Athletic Director Pete Derzys. The wire services, the NCAA and SI have all misused it, and when CBS let it slip once, the UAB president fired off a telegram. Besides, hyphens are small—easy to gag on—and UAB has had enough of that.

Five times this past December, Coach Gene Barrow's Blazers lost when they could have tied or won in the last minute. But in two Sun Belt Conference tournament games in Birmingham last weekend, they watched two other teams—North Carolina at Charlotte and Virginia Commonwealth—each take buzzer shots that failed to win or tie. Then, in the finale against South Florida and Lee Rose, the only other active coach to lead two different teams to the Final Four, Barrow and UAB won 64-47 for their second straight tournament title.

As the Blazers were winning, Bama was playing Auburn 58 miles south on Interstate 20 for eighth place in the SEC. Barrow didn't have to be reminded that the Tide starters included several of the state's finest high school players of the past two years, two of whom had originally committed to UAB.

The Sun Belt is that southern league where the schools all seem to be dressed in green and gold and the skies are not cloudy all day. But the tournament proved to be stormiest for the very teams that expected fair weather. By losing in the first round to Jacksonville, 6-14 during regular-season league play, top-seed Old Dominion probably played itself out

by Alexander Wolff

Charlie Bradley scoring 27 points to nose South Florida's 66-59 win over South Alabama. Afterward, Rose looked ahead to the Bulls' next game "Against ODU we'll choose our weapons," he said. "They're 12-2 and beat Virginia Commonwealth twice, which makes them the best team in the league." So, Lee, you're assuming you're playing Old Dominion? "We will play Old Dominion. That's not an assumption; I'd take a bet, Cup of coffee?" Make it with two lumps, please, to do justice to the sweetness of Jacksonville's 63-59 upset of the Monarchs. "It was double revenge," exulted Dolphin Coach Bob Wenzel. "To win the tournament we've got to get—what's the word for sex?—saxatagonal revenge. We've got to beat three teams that beat us twice."

In the semis the Dolphins had a chance against South Florida and Rose, who was seen having his foot fitted for his mouth when Jacksonville was up two at the half. Maurice Roulac, a 5'8" point guard, had fronted Bradley so effectively in the Dolphins' box-and-one defense that the nation's second-leading scorer—29.5 points per game entering the tournament—had only two points. But Bradley broke loose for 14 in the second half of the Bulls' 71-58 win. "Maurice was telling me not to shoot," said Bradley afterward. "I told him I couldn't shoot. I didn't have the ball."

Last season Rose didn't realize he had a scorer of Bradley's prowess on his squad. Bradley, who grew up noshing Cuban food in Tampa's Ybor City section, averaged only 5.0 points and shot just 38.0%, so concerned was he with feeding the Bulls' three senior NBA draftees-to-be. And, because of a teammate's injury, he had to do unfamiliar duty at guard. But it served him well. "Out from I could see the whole floor offensively and defensively," Bradley says. "Now, at forward, I'll get a rebound and take it all the way down the floor."

In the other semifinal game, UAB ended Virginia Commonwealth's winning streak, 61-59. The Rams, who defeated Western Kentucky 57-55 in the quarterfinals, had overcome their two regular-season losses to Old Dominion to be the

The Blazers finally got hot

Its regular season in ashes, UAB caught fire in the Sun Belt tournament

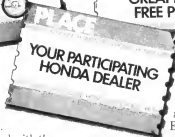
There's no hyphen. The University of Alabama in Birmingham, or UAB, is about as much Alabama-Birmingham as the school an hour down the road is Alabama-Tuscaloosa. So what if the Blazers still draw only 6,600 a game to the 17,000-seat Birmingham Coliseum, which isn't all that many more than were turned away from a TNT Championship Hot Rod Pull there last month? Spare them the hyphens. "I hate that

of a spot in the NCAA field. And with its semifinal loss to the Blazers, regular-season co-champion Virginia Commonwealth—SI's 15th-ranked team and winner of 15 straight going in against UAB—put the fate of a bid that it certainly deserves into the fickle hands of the NCAA tournament committee. By winning, the Blazers earned a bid they wouldn't have received otherwise.

The tournament began with Forward

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Monarchs for first place, finish with the league's best overall record, 22-5, and become the only Sun Belt team in the SI Top 20. But none of that seemed to concern UAB. Spurred by their home crowd, the Blazers overcame a 10-point halftime deficit, and then won when Virginia Commonwealth's Calvin Duncan, the league's co-Player of the Year with Bradley, missed a last-second shot.

The Blazers, who were an unimpressive 16-13 during the regular season, had reached the finals by slipping past North Carolina at Charlotte 65-63 when a last-second 49er three-pointer fell off the rim. Last spring was the most bitter-sweet period of Bartow's five seasons at UAB. As the Blazers were knocking off Indiana and Virginia in the NCAA Midwest Regional before losing to Louisville in the regional final, the state's finest high school player sat in the stands, waving a green-and-gold pom-pom, verbally committed to UAB. But Alfonso (Buck) Johnson eventually enrolled at Alabama just as Ennis Whatley had done the previous year, after also first agreeing to attend UAB. Recruiting wars like these have left the Blazers bereft of home-grown talent and more than a little embittered. "When we go head-to-head with the schools in this state we can't recruit anybody," says Bartow. "So we live on transfers and Memphis kids, kids who were eight years old when I had my good seasons at Memphis State."

UAB won the tournament because of the play of a rare Alabama product, Guard Luellen Foster, and an out-of-state transfer, Forward Cliff Pruitt. Pruitt had played a major role in UCLA's rush to the NCAA championship game in 1980 and again in 1981, but he began the following season unimpressively. Two cameo appearances in an unsanctioned summer league benched him for four games, and when he returned his spot in the lineup had been taken. He quit around Christmas, when the Blazers happened to be in Southern California for the Winston Tire Classic. They persuaded him to transfer and play out his final year of eligibility at UAB.

This season, Pruitt struggled, matching each brilliant play with an untimely turnover. Meanwhile Foster was not the same point guard who had directed the Blazers to within a hairsbreadth of the Final Four last March. He sprained an ankle in late December, spending the next two months shooting a sorry 31.3%

from the floor. Nonetheless, except for four free throws, including two by student government President Scott Simcik, Foster and Pruitt accounted for all of UAB's final 18 points against VCU.

The Blazers needed no such heroics against the Bulls, even though a prominent Tampa citizen and team booster named George Steinbrenner had funded the travel and lodging for two busloads of students to provide South Florida with some vocal support. During the final a banner reading THANKS, GEORGE hung from the upper deck, but the Bulls played as if they should be optioned to Columbus, shooting 27.2% for the game.

UAB outscored USF 17-2 during one stretch in the first half, and Bradley settled into what would be a frustrating four-for-17 outing. The Blazers ran their three-point halftime lead to as many as 22 while Pruitt, the tournament MVP, capped a breakaway with a whirlybird slam. Meanwhile one member of the Memphis Connection, Steve Mitchell, whose leanness with .05 left had beaten UNCC, chipped in with 12, and Foster got 11 along with loud Pimellian serenades of "Luuuuuuu." As for Rose, it was hard to tell what humbled him more, losing or having his powers of prognostication shown up. "I want y'all to know I picked Clooney," he said, "and I lost a cup of coffee on that, too." Rosemary? "The guy who fought Holmes," he said. "Cooney. Maybe that's why I lost on him." Next time he vowed he'd keep his mouth shut.

THE WEEK

(Feb. 28-March 6)

by ROGER JACKSON

EAST Boston College, which was picked to finish fifth in a Big East preseason coaches' poll, earned the top seed in next week's conference tournament in Madison Square Garden and kept a promise made to first-year Coach Gary Williams. "Last spring when I took the job, I didn't know what to expect," said Williams after BC defeated Providence 81-66. "But the players told me that we were going to have a good season, and they kept their word."

The Eagles' win over Providence, coupled with an 87-85 overtime victory over Georgetown before a crowd of 14,141, the largest to see a college game at Madison Square Garden in more than 30 years, gave BC a 12-4 Big East record and a share of first place with Villanova and

St. John's. But the Eagles were awarded the top seed because they had a 3-1 record in games with the Rednecks and Wildcats.

Second seed Villanova blew its chance to win the Big East title outright by losing 79-70 to Syracuse before 28,271 in the Carrier Dome and 87-71 to Georgetown in Landover, Md. Orange seniors Erich Sanifer, Tony (Red) Brum and Leo Rutins, playing their final regular-season game in the Carrier Dome, combined for 50 points, 18 rebounds and eight assists. "Saturday's another day," said Center John Pinone, who paced the Cats with 23 points, 19 of them in the second half. "We'll just have to go out and give it another shot."

But on Saturday the Wildcats fired nothing but blanks against Georgetown. Patrick Ewing led the Hoyas with 21 points and 15 rebounds to key a 17-2 spurt early in the second half that gave Georgetown a 62-41 lead with nine minutes to play. Nevertheless, Coach John Thompson thanks Villanova as the class of the Big East. "I still think the Wildcats are a better team than we are," said Thompson. "Villanova and St. John's are the two best teams in the conference."

Third-seeded St. John's sped to a 10-0 lead against Pitt in Alumni Hall and coasted to a 91-73 victory. David Russell scored 27 points in his final home appearance, and Chris Mullin added 20, including the 1,000th point of his career.

North Carolina needed a win at Duke to gain at least a tie for the ACC championship with Virginia and ensure itself the top seed in this week's conference tournament, and got it. North Carolina prevailed 105-81 as Michael Jordan scored 32 points and the Heels made 12 of 15 shots from outside the three-point line. Earlier, Jordan had 24 points in an 85-73 win at Georgia Tech. Ralph Sampson had 28 points and nine rebounds to pace Virginia to a 107-74 rout at Wake Forest. Then, in his final game at University Hall, Sampson got 23 points, including a foul-line jumper with four seconds left, and 10 rebounds in the Cats' 83-81 win over Maryland.

North Carolina A&T earned a bid to the NCAA tournament by trimming Howard 71-64 in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference final in Greensboro. Princeton clinched its second straight Ivy League title by upending visiting Columbia 72-56, and Fordham won the Metro Atlantic Conference crown, upsetting regular-season champ Iona 54-33 in the tournament title game.

MIDEAST In his pregame radio program before Indiana played Purdue in Bloomington, Hoosier Coach Bobby Knight was asked if his team might feel extra pressure with Ted Kitchel, the conference's leading scorer, out for the year following surgery on a ruptured disc in his lower back. "I don't know about that," said Knight. "A lot of players thrive on pres-

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sure. People who talk and write about games don't know anything about that. Homer once said—I think it was Homer—"I'd rather be a participant than a critic of events."

Whether or not Knight was right about Homer, Indiana's 64-41 thrashing of Purdue was a sad episode in the Boilermakers' odyssey. The Hoosiers held Purdue to a miserable 33.3% from the field. They then shot 69.7% in a 67-55 victory over Illinois. After that victory, Knight grabbed the public address microphone at Assembly Hall and told the crowd, "We need you one more time."

The "one more time" will be the Hoosiers' game this week against Ohio State in Bloomington for the Big Ten title, the third time in four years the Buckeyes will battle for it in front of hostile fans. If the Hoosiers win, they will clinch their first title in three years. A Buckeye victory would leave the two teams with identical 12-6 records, but Ohio State would claim the title by virtue of its sweep of the season series. Nonetheless, the prospect of once again being forced to settle the Big Ten race on the road so upset Buckeye Coach Elton Miller that after Ohio State's 74-73 overtime loss to Illinois in Columbus he snapped, "If anybody mentions championship to me again, I just might punch him in the mouth."

Miller was no doubt still furious about his team's horrid free-throw shooting: Ohio State, which began the week as the nation's top foul-shooting team (.780), hit just 15 of 27 from the line against Illinois. The Buckeyes recovered two days later against visiting Purdue, getting 14 points apiece from Larry Huggins and Tony Campbell in a 76-65 win.

After LSU clobbered Kentucky in Baton Rouge for the second straight year, 74-60, Tiger Coach Dale Brown was thinking of food. "Oh boy, dinner is going to taste good tonight," said the ebullient Brown. The Tigers, who two weeks ago were 14-11 overall and 5-8 in the SEC, gladly would have accepted scraps from the NIT's table. But thanks to Howard Carter's 23 points against the Wildcats and eight victories in LSU's last 10 games, the Tigers are 10-8 in the SEC, seeded second in next week's conference tournament and can taste an NCAA berth. Kentucky, the tournament's top seed, opened the week with a 61-58 win at Mississippi.

MIDWEST A few moments after Louisville had won its 1,000th game ever, a 73-64 Metro Conference victory at Virginia Tech, Cardinal Coach Denny Crum's thoughts turned to a nationally televised rematch with Memphis State. "We've got to play well on Sunday or else we'll get thumped," Crum said. "We beat them at Memphis, and they're going to come into our place shooting for revenge."

But the Tigers must now wait until the Metro Conference tournament in Cincinnati to dust one back to the Cards. With Mike Wagner hitting a jump shot from the edge of the

SI TOP 20

1. VIRGINIA (25-3)	1 *
2. UCLA (22-3)	2
3. LOUISVILLE (27-3)	3
4. HOUSTON (25-2)	4
5. ST. JOHNS (24-4)	5
6. UNLV (25-2)	7
7. WICHITA STATE (25-3)	8
8. N. CAROLINA (25-6)	11
9. MISSOURI (24-6)	12
10. INDIANA (22-5)	13
11. ARKANSAS (25-2)	9
12. KENTUCKY (21-5)	10
13. BOSTON COLL. (22-5)	20
14. VILLANOVA (21-6)	5
15. GEORGETOWN (20-8)	14
16. MEMPHIS STATE (21-6)	17
17. OHIO STATE (19-6)	16
18. OKLAHOMA (23-7)	—
19. VA. C'WALTH (23-6)	15
20. ILLINOIS STATE (21-6)	18

*Last week

free-throw line with one second left in overtime, Louisville won 64-62. Louisville opened the week with a 66-58 win over Murray State while Memphis State defeated Cincinnati 84-77 and Florida State 94-67.

During its team's seven-game losing streak to Arkansas in Fayetteville, Houston Coach Guy Lewis seemed to preface every postgame comment with "C'mon guys, let's get out of here." But after a 74-66 victory over the Hogs, the Cougars lingered at Barnhill Arena long enough to cut down the nets.

Houston chopped up the Razorbacks with a 2-3 zone defense and some torrid shooting by reserve swingman Benny Anders, who scored 18 points and hit eight of nine shots from the field. Houston's 93-64 romp in Baylor, made the Cougars the first team to go through a Southwest Conference season unbeaten since Arkansas was 16-0 in 1977. Houston, 16-0, has now won 24 straight conference games, tying the record established by Rice in 1928. The Owls would undoubtedly like to have some of those wins back. An 82-55 pasting by Arkansas left them 8-19 for the season and 2-14 in the league.

Yugoslav Center Zarko Duricic hit a pair of free throws with :29 left in the second overtime to give Wichita State a 97-96 win at Bradley. The Shockers ended the regular season with a 25-3 record and won the Missouri Valley Conference regular-season title, but they won't be playing in the NCAA tournament because they are on probation. "I'll always remember this team because of its cohesiveness," said senior Forward Antoine Carr. "We've been through a lot." Carr made his final homecourt performance a memorable one, scoring a school-record 47 points in a 109-83 rout of Southern Illinois.

Illinois State Coach Bob Donewald doesn't like the concept of revenge. "It's an ugly, ugly value to teach," he says. Nonetheless, the Redbirds got theirs at Creighton, shooting 61.0% from the floor to whip the Bluejays 94-63 and avenge an earlier loss in Omaha. The victory secured the top seed for the Redbirds in the MVC tournament. Earlier, Illinois State lost a 61-59 OT decision to Tulsa when the Golden Hurricane's Ricky Ricks hit a layup with four seconds left.

By edging Kansas State 49-47 on Jon Sundvold's 18-foot jumper at the buzzer, Missouri became the first Big Eight team in 49 years (the conference was then known as the Big Six) to win four straight undisputed titles. "This one and the first one, we weren't supposed to win," said Tiger Guard Mark Dressler. "Oklahoma was supposed to win this one." The Sooners, who finished second to Missouri, won twice, beating Iowa State 67-65 in overtime and Kansas State 72-70.

WEST "Our strength is playing as a team," said UCLA Coach Larry Farmer after the Bruins' 90-66 rout of Washington. "When we don't, we're very average." UCLA certainly wasn't average against the Huskies. Six Bruins, led by Darren Daye with 18 points and Kenny Fields with 17, scored in double figures. UCLA limited Washington to 43.7% shooting from the floor, and outrebounded the Huskies 44-37.

Nevada-Las Vegas was in trouble at halftime of its PCAA game at San Jose State. After the Spartans had scored six points in the final 1:47 of the half from the free-throw line, the Runnin' Rebels trailed 38-26. "I thought our chances were zero," said UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian later. But in the second half

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

TERENCE STANSBURY: The junior guard made 27 of 54 field-goal tries, including six of 14 three-pointers, and 16 of 20 free throws for 76 points, leading Temple to two Atlantic 10 Conference wins.

the Spartans fell apart, going scoreless in the final 4:30 as the Rebels won 67-61. A hounding full-court press forced San Jose State into 11 second-half turnovers, and UNLV Center Sidney Green scored 14 of his game-high 21 points after the intermission.

Cal State-Fullerton, UNLV's most formidable challenger in this week's PCAA tournament, has no illusions about an NCAA tournament invitation. "Right now, we are in a position where we will have to win the conference tournament for us to go to the NCAAs, even though we have a good record," said Point Guard Leon Wood. The Titans looked sharp in an 81-60 victory over UC-Santa Barbara, but Fresno State humbled Fullerton two nights later, 94-72.

END



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A long trip for a long shot

by William Leggett

Croeso, at 85-1, galloped out of the West to win the Florida Derby

In January, Tommy Trotter, the racing secretary and handicapper at Florida's Gulfstream Park, added up the list of 3-year-olds nominated, at \$300 per horse, to the \$250,000 Florida Derby. Trotter came up with two nice round numbers, 100 horses and \$30,000. Of those 100, 99 were from the North, the South and the East. Only a colt named Encourager was from the West. Encourager, unfortunately, was injured in a prep race and never made it to the Derby. But, as it turned out, that hardly meant the West went unrepresented.

One horse Trotter didn't have on his list in January was Croeso (Croy-sol), a chestnut gelding whose name is Welsh for welcome, but Croeso is on everyone's list now. Last Saturday afternoon, as an 85-1 late entry from California, Croeso stunned the biggest crowd in Gulfstream's history (33,189) when he turned back three challenges by the 2-5 favorite, Copelan, to win the Florida Derby by 1½ lengths. The winning payoff of \$172 on a \$2 wager nearly caused the infield tote board to short-circuit.

Long shots like Croeso are not supposed to win major events like the Florida Derby. During the race's last five runnings, favorites came through with almost boring regularity: Timely Writer in '82, Lord Avic in '81, Plugged Nickle in '80, Spectacular Bid in '79, Alydar in '78. Furthermore, the Florida Derby, the first race for classic contenders that goes as far as 1½ miles, this time was expected to give the East Coast a solid choice for the Kentucky Derby in May. That choice, it was forecast, would be the Fountain of Youth winner, Copelan.

As recently as four days before the Florida Derby, Croeso was munching out and looking out at the turn from his stall in Arcadia, Calif. But three days before the race, he was loaded on a plane with 14 other horses from California and supplemented to the Florida Derby at a cost of \$5,000, plus another \$2,500 to start. It was an expensive gamble. Since 1960, only one supplemental nomination had won the Florida Derby, Ruthie's Native in 1977. Moreover, Croeso's record was hardly impressive.

Until the Florida Derby, he had started only eight times, winning twice, in a maiden voyage at the Orange County (Calif.) Fair at Los Alamitos in October and a moderate allowance race in November at Hollywood Park.

Ah, but study his form more closely and something surprising pops up. In December, Croeso ran in the \$750,000 Hollywood Futurity and finished fourth behind 2-year-old champion Roving Boy, Desert Wine and Fifth Division. Croeso lost by 6¼ lengths, but beat the next horse home by 10. That fifth-place finisher: Copelan.

Croeso ended up in the Florida Derby because his co-owners, furniture man Roy Fowler and Fred Sahadi of Cardiff Stud Farm, were willing to play a long shot. Cardiff has a western division as well as one in the East: Jerry Fanning heads the California operation, while Steve DiMauro trains the eastern horses. In mid-February, Sahadi sent tapes of Croeso's races to DiMauro. DiMauro watched the films and noticed Croeso's speed. "Speed is dangerous anywhere," he says. "Always was, always is." So Croeso was shipped to Gulfstream and the Florida Derby.

Copelan broke sharply from the gate, well in front of Croeso, but by the first turn, the California horse had taken the lead. After half a mile, Croeso was 1½ lengths ahead. Copelan kept inching up to Croeso's saddle cloth only to have Croeso's jockey, Frank Olivares, let out a little on his gelding. On at least three occasions it seemed that Copelan, the winner of \$500,333, would scoot past Croeso, but each time he failed. Croeso was clocked in 1:49½, only a second slower than Timely Writer's Florida Derby but well off Gen. Dukes' 1957 stakes record of 1:46½.

The 85-1 odds on Croeso indicated that Floridians were unfamiliar not only with the West Coast horse, but also with his regular trainer, the 50-year-old Fanning. He has long been considered one of the top developers of young horses in California. Another Sahadi 3-year-old trained by Fanning is Desert Wine, a colt with a running style similar to that of Sa-

continued

Overlooked in Florida, Croeso and Olivares are certain to be looked over in Kentucky.

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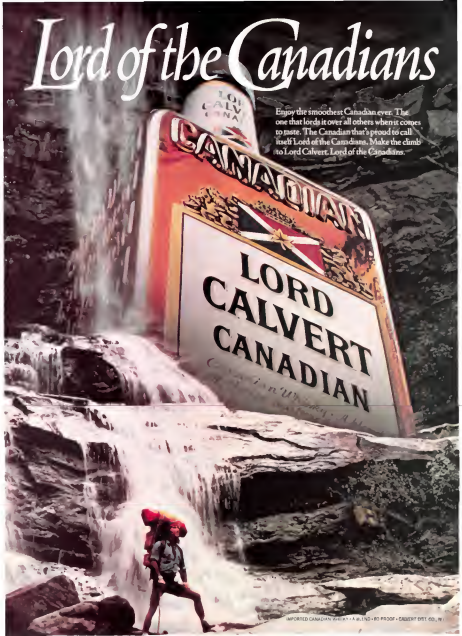
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blemate Croeso: Take the lead and hang in there. The day of the Florida Derby, Fanning saddled Desert Wine to win the \$110,900 San Rafael Stakes at Santa Anita by an easy 2½ lengths. That made Desert Wine the current West Coast favorite for the 3-year-old classics.

The Derby was only part of an extraordinary card at Gulfstream, Six of the 12 races were for 3-year-olds, 64 young horses in all, none of them clammers. The eighth race, for example, produced a very impressive winner in I Really Will, trained by John Velitch, the Alydar man. The ninth resulted in a smashing performance by Slewpy, the best colt in Seattle Slew's first crop of runners. Slewpy, winner of \$244,140 in 1982, seemed blocked in traffic three times but somehow extricated himself to win.

The seventh race, however, was the most memorable. Making her first appearance as a 3-year-old was the undefeated filly Princess Rooney, owned by Paula Tucker of Fort Lauderdale. By the end of last season Princess Rooney was regarded by many observers as the equal of the ill-fated Landaluce. She started six times as a 2-year-old and won her races by the staggering total of 56 lengths. Her major victories came last fall, when she won the East's two top 2-year-old filly races, the Friezette at Belmont and the Gardena at the Meadowlands, by eight and 11 lengths, respectively. Yet Princess Rooney's first start of 1983 was not against other fillies but against seven colts, five of them stakes winners.

That wasn't the way Trainer Frank Gomez had planned it. On the Monday before the Florida Derby, Princess Rooney was scheduled to run against her own sex in the \$97,200 Bonnie Miss Stakes. Heavy rains early in the day, however, caused Gomez to scratch the Princess. He sat in his office that morning looking through condition books for both Gulfstream and Hialeah, trying to find a race for his filly. None was available. Then he tried to talk Trotter into putting on an exhibition race on Florida Derby Day, but with 12 events already on tap, that, Trotter said, was impossible. But he mentioned that there was a \$30,000 race on Saturday for 3-year-olds that hadn't won two races worth \$8,500 since Dec. 1. So Gomez entered the Princess.

Princess Rooney stumbled coming out of the gate, righted herself and took the lead while looping the field at the top of the stretch. She won by half a length over

Morganmorganmorgan in a most impressive performance, covering the seven furlongs in 1:23½, only ⅓ slower than Slewpy ran his seven. Many experts suspected, and probably rightly so, that Princess Rooney was running at about 80% of her ability. Still, Gomez was making no predictions about entering her in the Kentucky Derby. "She's nominated to both the Kentucky Oaks and the

tory and was impressed "It was the fastest number I'd ever put on a filly," he says. "The track was slow that day, and for a filly to break 1:25 at Calder is exceptional. She ran a 1:23½. At the end of the year my figures showed that Princess Rooney was daylight ahead of Landaluce."

The two fillies, of course, never met, racing having lost a great attraction when



The gray Princess was at her royal best in her win over Morganmorganmorgan.

Derby," he says. "There's a lot of time ahead." Until then, Gomez and his Princess can just sit back and watch the colts. If this is a year replete with 85-1 shots, the Princess might indeed run for the roses.

Gomez is based at Miami's Calder Racetrack, and Princess Rooney is the best horse to emerge from that track since it opened in 1971. It's always difficult to judge how good Calder horses are because the track has a synthetic surface covered with sand that makes the horses seem to bounce as they gallop. Many good Calder horses find it impossible to carry their form to other tracks. But Princess Rooney is not one of them.

After the Princess won her first four races there, she became the Queen of Calder. She ran in her first stakes race there in September, the seven-furlong Melaleuca, and won by a mere 12 lengths. John Price of Long Island's Newsday applied his handicapping system to Princess Rooney's Melaleuca vic-

torial infection. "It was horrible," says Gomez. "My heart went out to the Landaluce people. All they have to show for it is an Eclipse trophy and grand memories. I still have a magnificent filly to look at and race."

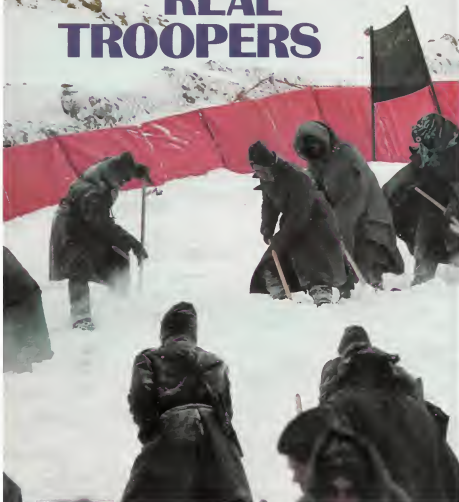
Princess Rooney is going to make the next two months interesting. She will take a parallel course to the colts, entering their races only when Gomez decides that the competition is so-so. Each decision will be carefully made, because, after all, her record is a spotless 7 for 7. Racing fans nowadays aren't accustomed to such success, particularly with the current crop of 3-year-olds. The last major 3-year-old with such a record was Seattle Slew, who won the 1977 Triple Crown with a 9 for 9.

No matter what the colts and geldings do in the weeks leading up to the Kentucky Derby, it's Paula Tucker's Princess that people will be talking about. Will she or won't she?

END



THEY WERE REAL TROOPERS





by **BOB OTTUM**

At the pre-Olympics, as visitors griped and the Yugoslav army diligently groomed the slopes, Sarajevans showed they can probably pull off the '84 Winter Games—in a style all their own

man, chief of the distance judges, a round, bear of a man, craggy-faced, is turning out ponchos with his Swiss army knife. He has already outfitted all of his judges, who must stand exposed alongside the jump. "Some officials have big heads to match their egos," he says, "and so for them, I cut bigger holes." He grins at the wonderful lunacy of the scene.

There's a sudden, whispery swoosh just overhead as another jumper goes off. The workers all turn and peer out as the jumper is enveloped by the mist, and then they shrug. The shrugs aren't unsympathetic, just the reaction of people who figure that jumpers are crazy anyway. A soaked cardboard box lies at their feet, piled high with sandwiches—ham and pungent white feta cheese between thick slices of bread. Now one of the workers gets out an unlabeled bottle of homemade *sljovitz* and pours three or four fingers into a plastic glass for a visitor. Drinks are poured all around and toasts are proposed, with the glasses held high in mottled hands: "Živili [ZHLEE-vu-hi]" The *sljovitz*, high-octane plum brandy, sears all the way down, and soon the warmth spreads up over one's cheeks and forehead. Within minutes, blood starts surging back into fingers and toes. Each drinker knows he could breathe on the side of a house right now and cause the paint to peel.

But aside from the modest animal pleasure afforded by standing under a ski jump belting *sljovitz*, what's the point of this exercise? This peculiar jumping event is taking place on Friday, Feb. 11, near the end of a month of competition in and around Sarajevo, Yugoslavia as part of a preliminary test of the various venues that will be used in the 1984 Winter Olympics. Some of the competition has been good; much of it has been ineptly run. Almost everything has been staged in nasty weather and under difficult conditions. Very unusual weather, the Sarajevans said. Perhaps. But two weeks before the ski-jumping events, the first attempt at the men's downhill had to be postponed because the course lacked snow. Ten days after that, on still another mountainside, the women's giant slalom was completely blown away in a storm so

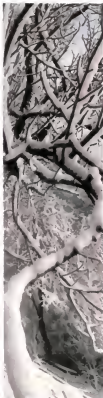
fierce that the empty chairs on the ski lift were strung out horizontally from their support cable. And now, sure enough, at the 70-meter ski jump, word arrives that this event is to be postponed, too. That caps it.

The handling of this winter's pre-Olympics raises the serious question of whether Yugoslavia can actually succeed at the formidable task of staging the 1984 Winter Games. The Sarajevo Olympics will be a \$135 million production, in a nation that is far from rich, that has \$20 billion in foreign debt and is wracked by

The day is so dismal and wet that anybody out in it should be stopped and questioned. It's raining and snowing at the same time, and occasional hursts of wind sweep diagonally across the 70-meter ski jump. Because of the weather, from the side of the hill it's impossible to see the start of the jump, and after the jumpers do come into view they pass out of sight as abruptly as they appeared. Yet they're still coming down the run, their skis making a sizzling sound. They take off into the mist with that characteristic upward lunge, uncoiling with a thrust of their thighs. Then they vanish in the storm. It borders on the *hurarre*, swoosh, lunge, and they are gone.

They're landing somewhere not too far below, 275 feet or so, and one can hear the soft whump of skis hitting the icy out-run. But no other sound marks the landings, mostly because there's no crowd around to do any cheering, and one suspects that packs of wolves may be dashing out of the pine forests on either side of the run to drag the jumpers away.

Other strange things are going on, adding to the sense of unreality. Shadowy figures ghost in and out of the mist in wraps of transparent plastic, cut from heavy-grade stuff of the kind used to cover construction equipment that must be left outdoors. It turns out that the source of this rain gear lies under the lip of the ski jump, a dark area almost like a cave, where a group of workers and ski-jumping officials have taken refuge. Anton Er-



30% inflation. But it is, of course, too late to turn back, organizational foul-ups and uncertain weather notwithstanding. A country's pride hangs in the balance, and if the Games aren't a success, some say, no amount of shivovitz will be enough to soften the sense of shame.

But this isn't a suspense story. The answer is: Yes, they'll do it. Sarajevo will pull off the 1984 Winter Olympics. However these won't be the Games we've come to know, with the icy professionalism of Innsbruck or Sapporo. Sarajevo will present the Olympics as Theater—a

wide-ranging drama in which a few sporting scenes will be played. There will surely be moments of disaster. Ah, but when that occurs it will be romantic disaster, whimsical disaster, which definitely wasn't the case at Lake Placid, circa 1980, when an entire community displayed a growing meanness of spirit as things went wrong.

While Sarajevo is a place of warm and lively people, it has its problems as an Olympic site. The city lies under a permanent pall of smoke; most pre-Olympics athletes came down with what came

to be known as Yugo Throat, and it's likely to strike again next year. There aren't enough hotel rooms, and there are few parking places in town and definitely not enough at the Olympic venues. There is, however, plenty of Yugoslav white wine, and it's terrific. And cheap.

The spoken language, Serbo-Croatian, rings and clangs with harsh sounds, and the written version is festooned with accent marks that hover above the words like tiny black gnats. Next year 98 translators will be working with the press at the Games. At times the English version

continued

A view from the bob run: Snow covers Sarajevo and the Miljacka River, giving a Christmas-card look to the usually drab industrial city of 450,000.





The men's downhill course starts on the top floor of the Mount Bjelasnica restaurant, then plunges down a steep ramp and onto the mountainside.



SARAJEVO

Continued

of printed or spoken matter as rendered by translators on the job this winter resembled dialogue written for a 1930s Hollywood screenplay, back in the days when broken English was considered screamingly funny. "We have a nice history here," said translator Olivera Todorović, a 19-year-old premed student hired to work the pre-Olympics. "But after 500 years under the Turks, we are the world's most backwardness."

Asked to identify the tiny black birds that gather to sing raucously in the Sarajevo trees after dark, she said, "They are called"—Todorović makes the translation in her mind and then nods with assurance—"they are called 'insignificant birds.'" Aida Beglerović, another translator, said, "Our people, they are still surprised by all this. I mean, we are seeing our very own downhill or bobsledding racing showing on our television, and we are all thinking, 'My God! This program could only be coming from another country!'"

But oh, yes, the show will go on, despite the fact that each of the pre-Olympic events brought with it a little crisis. It's no wonder that many of the locals came out of the far end slightly dazed by the enormity of their project. There was one Yugoslav Alpine official who, when asked what might solve the serious problems with the physical layout of the men's downhill course, stared thoughtfully at the mountain for a long moment and then murmured, "Send shovels."

Not all the visitors were pleased with their hosts' efforts. As the four-man bobsled team wound down, Austrian Coach Josef Haidacher stood at the bottom of the new \$20 million run, full of melancholy. He didn't like much of what he'd seen, from the smoky city to the food to the disorganization of what he called lazy people. "We are getting out of town *schnell, schnell, schnell*," Haidacher said. "Three weeks in Sarajevo is like three weeks in your Sang Sing."

A few days later, the Organizing Com-

mittee of the XIV Olympic Winter Games issued a cheery statement pointing out that with a year to go before the opening ceremonies, "there is very little work left, only the cosmetics."

Those were two of the extreme viewpoints of the month.

As it turned out, both opinions were wrong.

As you go up on the chair lift, rising swiftly above the tree line, the sight is impressive. Scary at times, Mount Bjelasnica (Byel-ASH-nee-tza) is 20 miles out of Sarajevo on a tortuous, 195-lane road. The mountain is bold on top, and somehow sinister. Perhaps it's the ice, polished to a soft shine by the wind. One dismounts with the feeling that, if the Good Lord had meant for there to be a starting gate for downhill racers at the top of Bjelasnica, at 6,780 feet, He wouldn't have exposed it to such a blast. For this is a place where the warm winds off the Mediterranean meet the chill winds coming off the Continent, and when they clash, they swirl crazily, sweeping everything before them—including downhill racers.

The Yugoslavs understand all of this. But Bjelasnica is the only mountain around that can handle the men's Alpine events, and when you've got the Olympics, what can you do? (The giant slalom and slalom runs start a thousand feet down the mountain, tucked away a bit more safely in the trees.) Sarajevo has

continued



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SARAJEVO

BY TIM LEE

had a weather station on Bjelašnica since 1892, one of the first in all Europe, and the Yugoslavs have learned a lot in those 91 years. The mountain averages 12 feet of snow cover a season, the snow blankets the upper slopes an average of 217

hault into their 12-day schedule, and there will be a great holding of breath next year as everyone plays for good weather.

For all its icy splendor, Bjelašnica isn't really a big mountain, indeed, it comes about 25 feet or so short of providing the 300 meters of vertical drop required for an official Olympic men's downhill. So, perched smartly on the very tip-top of Bjelašnica, like a New Year's Eve party hat, is a new ski lodge-restaurant. The top of the ski lift vanishes into the lower level of the not-quite-finished structure. One walks up several short flights of stairs to emerge in what will be a restaurant on the top floor. It has windows all around and the view is breathtaking—even as the windows rattle in the wind. Off to one side is a sundeck. On the southwest side of the mountain, the back side, one can look down on tiny farms that have remained unchanged for centuries, a land undisturbed by Olympic activity. But on the southeast side...

There it is: the official starting gate for the men's downhill. The Sundeck Getaway. The new structure adds enough elevation to the course to meet Olympic standards, with perhaps three meters to spare. This may be the first Olympics in history in which a downhiller could hand his luncheon tray over to a waitress, buckle on his crash helmet and say, "Ta ta, dahling, I'm off to the races." There's only a small matter of a 51-degree drop to negotiate on

the way to the main part of the race-course. It's like sking off the side of the World Trade Center.

The pre-Olympic racers learned this and a lot more. The icy section from the starting gate to the safety of the tree line is roughly 700 feet, and with the wind swirling through in bursts, as it does up there, winning an Olympic gold medal—or any medal—might well be a matter of luck over skill. He who catches the hull will be lucky.

Farther down the run, rocketing along at some 70 mph, the skiers encounter still

another wild section: a series of bumps, some the size of a three-bedroom bungalow. They were bulldozed there in a misguided attempt to make the run truly Olympian in scope. "I couldn't believe how much time I spent in the air," said Canadian ace Steve Podborski. "Coming off the bumps and flying like some Superman, I'd look down between my skis and see myself passing over the spots where the others had landed." But the problem with Bjelašnica's artificial bumps, the racers found, was that whoever put them there hadn't figured out the geometry of landing, as a result, most racers came down on flat areas with great thunks that drew wincers from anyone watching. While in training in the week before the pre-Olympic downhill, Switzerland's Peter Müller flew off one bump into a series of aerial maneuvers Podborski called "a helicopter followed by a head plant." Müller escaped with a severe concussion. "I think we should insist that our ski jumpers run this course—not the downhillers," said Austrian Leonhard Stock.

The downhill consisted of a day of training, a day without snow and a day of racing. The Bad Day at Bjelašnica cost the Organizing Committee \$40,000. To keep the racers around for the extra day and to avoid the embarrassment of not having a race, they had to agree to pay the competitors for an extra day's expenses at Sarajevo and at their next stop on the World Cup circuit.

But the result seemed to tell as much about the course as anything the racers had said. When everybody got down off the hill, the surprise winner was one Gerhard (They Call Me Fuffie) Pfaffenbichler, a big, honky, 20-year-old farm boy. He had absolutely bombed the course through its 35 gates in a terrific 1:48.81, comfortably ahead of Podborski (1:49.02) and Fuffie's teammate Franz Klammer (1:49.07). Fuffie announced how he loved the bumps. "I didn't ski the ideal line," he said, "but I was sure fast."

And then came the final Drama of the Downhill, acted out in the smoky lobby of the Bristol Hotel in Sarajevo.

It was dark outside. The bags and skis were packed and stacked in huge untidy piles in the lobby, outside, the buses were warming up for the trip to the airport. The racers lounged about, looking bored. It was that milling-around time so familiar to anybody who has ever been on a tour, sking or otherwise. And into

continued



The combined high-logic run is Sarajevo's triumph

days a year. That's the good news. The weather people are less eager to recall that the winter storms are doozies. They last an average of three days, they create huge drifts that obliterate all the ski runs, and they're powered by winds that can twirl the lift chairs around the cable like propellers until the whole thing takes off and flies to Albania. There are also days, as there were last month, that bring glare ice to the top of Bjelašnica and 50° warmth below, with folks idling about improving their suntans. The Winter Games usually have only one storm day

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SARAJEVO

continued



Olympic mascot Vukko is a favorite snowman.

the lobby, strolling companionably and laughing, came Klammer and Fuffie. Suddenly there was an explosion—a sharp, bursting *blam!* like a gunshot.

"Aaaaarrgh," Klammer yelled, and fell to the marble floor clutching his stomach. "Aaaaarrgh," said Fuffie, who collapsed beside him. There was a shocked second of silence, a panicked moment of sharply indrawn breath. And then the Austrians all burst out laughing. On the lobby floor, still smoking, was a firecracker.

Swell. If there's one assumption that can safely be made about Sarajevo, it's that this definitely isn't the spot to pull off such a stunt—not here, where assassination lies on the edge of everyone's subconscious; not here, a few blocks away from the spot where a Serbian nationalist named Gavrilo Princip shot Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife to death on June 28, 1914, indirectly igniting World War I.

Still, the firecracker gag served to answer a nagging question. Until then, one

faintly puzzling thing about the pre-Olympics was the apparent lack of security. Oh, there was the Yugoslav army, all right, but the soldiers were mostly unarmed young conscripts who marched up and down the courses to pack the trails. But now, suddenly, the Bristol lobby swarmed with plainclothes agents. They had undergone a lightning change, from lounge lizards slumped in lobby chairs to alert—and really ticked-off—cops. The young guy in charge was dressed in a tan sport coat and slacks. No tie. The least likely security agent in town. And now he was hot. He was all for strip-searching everybody on the spot.

"No fire, no fire," Fuffie protested in English, first opening his coat and then patting all his pockets to show that he didn't have any firecrackers on him. Klammer, trying hard to keep a straight face, pointed out that he certainly couldn't have done it. The rest of the Austrian team wore looks of sweet innocence. And off went the entire knot of agents and skiers to search rooms for firecrackers. The skiers all made the bus to the airport, of course.

Later in the week, Olympic press officer Mehmed Husić pointed out that certainly the Sarajevans were worried about terrorists and of course definite precautions had been taken. "But we're not like other nations, with the uniformed men at every corner with their sub-machine guns," he said. "We don't do that. With we Yugoslavs," he said, "the best security man is the man you don't see he's there."

There's a spot midway down the bobsled run where the racers could—if they could get the timing right—swing their heads to the right and look down into the eyes of the spectators looking up at them. It's not that the sleds are hanging particularly high on this curve, it's just that the new run does some wonderful dippy-dos on its way down the mountain-

side, and in a couple of sections it hangs up there over everybody's head.

"Well, it does give you a real buzz," said Martin Dawes, a rangy member of the British team. The British have a stunning, glossy-black sled. Not fast, mind you, just stunning. "This monster run is a bit fearful at first."

Exactly. The bobsled-luge run will come to be known as the Great Buzzer, the turn-on of the 1984 Winter Games. And for a number of very good reasons: The run has become Sarajevo's new toy, perhaps the best present a town could get in these hard times. It sits smack above the city in a hillside notch called Trebević. A cable car runs right up to it; or one could stroll up in a leisurely hour or so. Trebević has long been a sort of parklike preserve for picnicking by day and necking by night. And now, after dark each day, the run is brightly lit like a jeweled necklace for all the town to see. Cab drivers proudly point it out to foreign passengers: "See up there? Our bob run."

The guy who created this masterpiece had never built a bob run before, which, as it turns out, is obviously the way to go. Gorazd Bučar, a city engineer, collected advice from several international sled-

continued



Živiti! A couple of Sarajevans keep warm and in Olympic spirits with a sip—or two—of slivovitz.

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SARAJEVO

continued

ding experts—just about every visiting team at the pre-Olympics took bows for having helped—and came up with a new concept in bobsled-luge. It's the world's first sectional, move-it-around, refrigerated run. After the Olympics and between championship meets, it can be unhooked here and there to form three independent separate runs so that Mom, Pop, everybody in town can go sledding on them.

But for now the sledders face a 4,084-foot dash that starts at 3,636 feet altitude and ends with a mighty swoop at 3,223 feet, a 413-foot vertical drop. The steepest grade in the run is 15 degrees, which sounds innocent enough—except that you're on ice. The run snakes through 13 curves, six to the left and seven to the right, a couple of them real neck-wrenchers. "There's no time to rest," says Ekkehard Fasser, pilot of the Swiss four-man sled that blew everybody away in the competition. "After the seventh curve, everything has to be just so. The remainder of the turns are very tight, and there isn't a brakeman here who isn't hurting right now."

The hot two-man sleds were making the run in 49 and 50 seconds—which computes out to an average speed of 55 to 56 mph—and the big sleds were just a bit quicker than that. "That's fast," says East Germany's Wolfgang Götterwort. "You reach 62 miles an hour at the fourth or fifth curve. Maybe 77 miles an hour is your top speed." Bučar agrees, but figures that when they get all the kinks worked out the sleds will top out at maybe 93 mph.

Perhaps they will in the Olympics. But for this winter's cheering Sarajevo crowd, a few miles an hour more or less wasn't going to make any difference. The pre-Olympic show was also the official European championships, involving 39 two-man and 24 four-man crews from 15 countries, and nobody in town had ever seen an event this big.

A wide gravel pathway meanders alongside the bob run—in some spots ducking underneath—and the path is packed with spectators. Here and there along the trail are refreshment stands—

maybe the only hot dog stands in the world that sell slivovitz, hearty slugs of it in little airline-type bottles. The Swiss sled wins the four-man gold medal. Živić! Bernhard Lehmann and Bogdan Musul of East Germany win the two-man. Živić! The orange sleds of Yugoslavia finish way back there, but aren't they brave lads? Živić! The empties litter the path and the fierce smell of slivovitz hovers like a fog over the crowd.

The locals learn the language and magic of bobsledding quickly. At the start, they watch as the sledders appear in skintight racing suits, crash helmets and elbow pads. The racers lean against their sled and raise their feet, and a trainer

You get to watch and, in a small way, participate. And the lugers, when they come to town a week later, provide much the same kick. "I'm really impressed," says Bonnie Warner, 20, a U.S. luger from California's Mt. Baldy Village. "Usually you can't satisfy both sports with a combination bobsled-luge run. Bobsledders like big, wide curves, and lugers like them tight. But this is a compromise between the two—with all of the speed thrown in."

And now the time has come to head back down the pathway and check out the refreshment stands. One or two of the bobsleds have gone belly up, but there are no critical injuries.

Quite a few spectators have gone belly up, too.

She blasts under the finish line banner in perfect form, in a full racing tuck with legs firmly apart and head down, and then, after skidding to a stop, grabs the team radio to report back to the racers waiting on top. "It's in better shape than I thought," says Cindy Oak of the U.S. ski team. "Tell them just to put their heads down and punch it." Then she looks back up the course to watch her competition. Oak is wearing a crash helmet emblazoned with what appear to be Harley-Davidson wings, and when she pulls it off, her towny blonde hair falls in braids. She's 22, 5' 8" and lean at 145 pounds. "I don't know," Oak says as she watches other, slightly faster, times being posted. "Maybe I hit it too hard."

This is the finish of the women's downhill, a pre-Olympic and World Cup event being staged in an out-at-the-elbows ski resort called Jahorina, the least attractive of all the Olympic venues.

This mountain is on the other side of town from Bjelacina and is more modest in almost all of its dimensions. The start is perched at 6,140 feet, and the course snakes through thick stands of fir and evergreens over a 1,794-foot vertical drop, most of it umbeling along at an average 29-degree grade. There's one stretch in the middle where there's a 56-degree pitch. With all that, the course can't seem to make up its mind what it wants to be. "It's too short for an Olympic run," says



The Bjelacina station monitors some extraordinary weather.

scrapes their shoes with a wire brush to give them traction on the ice. Then, rocking the sled back and forth, they chant the countdown in unison. This is the moment the crowd is waiting for. For some arcane reason, bobsledders have always started with this chant. It takes no time to learn and it comes in no special language. And now, as the racers push off, the on-lookers all yell in thunderous unison. "Hup, hup! Chuck, chuck, chuck!"

No wonder it's such a great venue.

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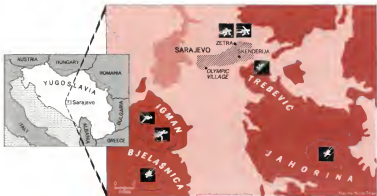
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SARAJEVO

continued



All venues, here with the symbol of a typical event to be held at each, are within 20 miles of Skenderija, where medal ceremonies may take place

Hanni Wenzel of Liechtenstein. "In the middle it's more like a giant slalom."

"There is, sure enough, a bit of GS in there," says Holly Flanders, 25, from Deerfield, N.H. "The problem is that the course runs right through this narrow gully or gulch, and about the only thing they could do was to put more control gates in there. It's marginal. It's not the best downhill we've ever had."

The winner is perky Maria Walliser of Switzerland, who covers the course in 1:19.28. Nobody seems particularly impressed. It all might be just one more stop on the circuit.

But, at last! Drama is about to come to Jahorina. A howling storm strikes in the middle of the night, and the officials decide that if they don't tell anybody about it, perhaps it'll go away.

It doesn't. Indeed, by early Sunday morning, when the troupes of racing innocents are busily slowly up the narrow road from Sarajevo for the women's giant slalom, Jahorina is being slashed by the most savage storm of the season. Winds are blasting through at 75 mph, the lift is shut down and flags, poles, and gates have long since vanished under snowdrifts. Some racers and team captains are out on the course awaiting instructions; everybody else huddles inside the lodge, faces pressed to the windows. Finally, about noon, team by team, the racers start to escape, groping their way through the parking lot with arms out-

stretched and parkas flapping as if in a scene from *Lost Horizon*.

Back downtown, the Organizing Committee produces a bulletin announcing that it had decided at 8:10 not to conduct course inspection and at 8:35 had decided to call everything off. "Teams were notified of this immediately," the bulletin says. It sounds efficient, but unhappily, as Nick Howe of the U.S. team points out, it simply isn't true. "Our people and other teams as well were on the hill and on their radios all morning trying to find out what was going on," he says.

The departing women have a suggestion for 1984: If it's storming that badly on Jahorina, simply hang out a sign at the bottom of the road. CLOSED FOR INVENTORY. Or whatever.

Now, back to the ski-jump venue. But this time the day is so bright, the skies are so brilliant, that a couple of thousand or so Sarajevans have trekked up from town. Lord knows how; the nearest parking is back on the road, far, far down the mountainside. They've brought the kids; they've brought homemade sleds and picnic lunches in plastic sacks; and they've brought many, many bottles of you-know-what. Blankets are spread on the snow, and before long, snowmen appear magically here and there, many in the likeness of Vučko—Wölfe, in Serbo-Croatian—the Olympic mascot.

Men are falling out of the sky. They

are etched vividly for brief seconds against the blue and then the green of the fir trees as they descend from the 90-meter jump.

The 90- and 70-meter ski jumps sit side by side, towering over the rolling Plain of Igman. Legendary Igman, the Yugoslavs call it, because on a bitterly cold February day in 1942 a band of 1,200 partisans escaped German encirclement by means of a forced march across the plain. The plain opens upward into a stunning high-mountain meadow, a shoulder of Mount Bjelasnica, whose peak, even on this bright day, is lost in swirling snow.

Making giant looping circles and figure eights through the meadow are Nordic racecourses, most of them laid out to follow the natural rolling terrain. All 14 Nordic skiing events will be staged here next February, and a lodge will be built at the far edge of the meadow to serve the competitors. For pure sport, far from the madding downtown crowd, Nordic competitors usually have the best of it. "We're happy," says Mike Gallagher, the chief U.S. men's cross-country coach. "The courses are good, though the women's are a bit tough. We'll have some winners and some losers, as they say."

Happy, indeed. The U.S. teams now being assembled and hammered into shape by Nordic Team Director Jim Page might be the surprise of next season. Lean and powerful, Nordic com-

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Sarajevo likes to be called a sporting city, and with good reason. Indeed, it's said that 50,000 of its 450,000 citizens are involved in organized sports through 140 clubs, with 15,000 of those participants active in "first-class" sports. The Sarajevans play a mean game of

hoops, among other things, a local amateur team, Bosna, was the European Champions' Cup winner in 1979. On a more casual level: "We're all very healthy because we don't like to work too much," says Dr. Lala Stajić, an anesthesiologist at a Sarajevo clinic. "We'd rather go to the mountains and ski."

As for the Winter Olympics, according to the Organizing Committee preparations are 90% complete, about all that's left to do is tie up loose ends and bring on the torch. The Games were originally budgeted at \$160 million, but in the middle of the Olympic trials last month, it was announced that the actual cost would be \$135 million because of savings realized by beating construction schedules and by cutting out some ski lifts, parking lots and access roads. While much of the cost will be covered by TV revenues and commercial tie-ins, everyday citizens have taken pride in helping the cause by having a few dinars deducted from their paychecks.

The Alpine and Nordic venues are challenging, to say the least, and the new bobbed run is a positive gem. The pride of the downtown area is the Zetra complex. It consists of the remodeled and expanded Koševo soccer stadium, an arena for ice hockey and figure skating and a speed-skating oval. In the stadium a crowd of 50,000 will view the opening ceremonies. The new arena next door, an ultramodern, angular edifice, is copper-sheathed and glows warmly when the sun shines. According to the committee, the arena will seat 8,000 for competitive events and the closing ceremonies, but they've got to be counting on people clinging to the rafters and

setting a few chairs out on the ice. A more realistic estimate would be 5,000 or so, and that's if spectators don't show up in down-filled parkas. Next door, the speed-skating oval is handsome and clean-lined, ringed by stands for 2,000 enthusiasts. For everyone else, there's television.

The early-round hockey games and figure-skating compulsions will be conducted in two brand-new sports halls at Skenderija, which is a sort of monster shopping mall in the middle of Sarajevo. There's talk that nightly medal-award ceremonies will be staged on a balcony overlooking the plaza that surrounds the mall.

The Olympic Village is only four miles from downtown, in a suburb called Moyaš, easily reachable by a Taconville-type trolley. The Village consists of the usual sterile-looking medium-rises that will later become housing for the townsfolk. The press will be put up in similar buildings nearby, and other Olympic visitors, the committee says, "will find accommodations in private residences and hotels." If this year's pre-Olympics crush was any indication, they're going to need lots of luck.

For those who attended the pre-Olympic events, there was a feeling of relief on getting out of town—and yet there was also a poignant sense of hope that the Yugoslavs can actually pull off a first-rate Olympics. As one of the organizing committee's translators, Olivera Todorović, says, "We want to do this. We have to make people of the outside world believe that we're capable of staging the Winter Games." —B.O.

boned ace Kerry Lynch, 25, put in a dismal day at the 70-meter jumps, finishing 22nd, and then came back the next day to blow everybody's doors off in the 15-km race, to pull up to 10th overall. In 1984, says Page, "Kerry should consistently finish in the top five."

The star of the show, of course, is Bill Koch, who, at 27, strides across the landscape with mature confidence. His silver in the 30 km at Innsbruck in 1976 made him the first American ever to win an Olympic medal in cross-country, and here on the Plain of Igman, the reigning World Cup champion puts on a couple of stunning new moves. Early in the competition, Koch breaks a basket on a ski pole just after the start of the 15 km and finishes far back in the pack. Then in the murderous 30 km, he's lost in the starting sequence. He's using no-wax skis, because he and Gallagher figure that the weather is so changeable, and one of the

skis is broken. Well, it's a favorite pair and it isn't a bad break. By the end of the first lap Koch is running second. "I passed more people today than I ever have in my career," he says later. He finishes first, in 1:29:56.8, to continue his World Cup domination. The next man in, Norway's Lars Erik Erikson, is two minutes back. "I didn't feel really good," says Koch calmly, "but my skis were great."

That's what Koch said, all right. But here's what the Organizing Committee official bulletin said he said:

"I went for all or nothing. I simply had to rehabilitate from the failure in the 15-km race. I went for the finish so to say from the start. I didn't care about the snow that stuck to my skis nor the wind that froze my breath. I had the best intermediate time, which gave me strength to hold out to the finish. I am especially happy with this victory. I really wanted

to triumph in Olympic Sarajevo. I hope that I'll have a similar success in 1984 at the Games. . ."

This is indeed a strange country, as promised, and not all the picnicers know what's going on, only that it's something truly big and it involves flags and a lot of fun. Back in town, journalist Ajda Beglerović had said, "We are not an intense people. It's not our nature to be caring too much for schedule." And that says a lot about the Winter Games to come: the independent-minded Yugoslavs are in the process of getting up an Olympics of gentle chaos.

Walking up the stairway alongside the 90-meter ski jump, Jeff Hastings, 23, America's premiere jumper, pauses to survey the party scene far below. "The thing about Yugoslavia," he says, "is that I hover between elation and despair at the organization. But the people are so nice." —BHO

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Edited by GAY FLOOD

TELANDER'S TRYOUT

Sir

I was delighted to read Rick Telander's story about his tryout with the Chicago Blitz of the new U.S. Football League (*A Final Farewell to Football*, Feb. 28), and I was glad to learn that the new league is taking football seriously. The USFL is just what I need to keep up my boycott of the NFL after its ridiculous strike. I know a lot of people have forgiven the players for their midseason walkout, but I can't.

RANDY J. ROSS
Lowell, Mich.

Sir

Rick Telander's description of his experience with the Chicago Blitz was absorbing. If the USFL can hold my interest the way Telander's article did, it will be a success.

CARE NAVA
Montic, Va.

Sir

Rick Telander's fine piece left me as sad as he apparently was about leaving the Blitz training camp. To cheer him up I made this drawing (below). As you look at it, imagine that Telander did make the team and that he survived a long season all the way to the USFL championship game against the Philadelphia Stars. With the score 17-17 and time running out, Quarterback Chuck Fusina of the Stars lofts a long sideline pass intended for Scott Fitzkee. Telander, playing a deep zone from his safety position, races over and makes a leaping, fingertip interception. Then after juggling the ball, he dodges three tacklers and lunges past a sprawling Fusina to score the winning touchdown.

Every time Telander writes a piece for SL, he scores a winning touchdown.

TOM MOSSER
Huntingdon, Pa.



Sir

Rick Telander's excellent portrayal of his training camp fiasco with the Chicago Blitz showed that the USFL has a long way to go to compete with the NFL. Most of the USFL clubs seem disorganized, which is what one might expect when as many as 340 players are signed by one team. But what I find appalling is the recruiting of convicts by George Allen. Are these the role models we want our youngsters looking up to?

Although the recent signing of the magnificent Herschel Walker by the New Jersey Generals will help the new league greatly, the USFL's demise is imminent. America's love quality pro football but will not receive it from the upstairs league. I'm an NFL fan and will be watching baseball instead of semipro football until the real season begins in September. Go Redskins!

CHUCK OWEN
Annapolis, Md.

BLOUNT'S BALL GAME

Sir

When I first heard about the Chicago Cubs' camp for middle-aged kids (*We All Had a Ball*, Feb. 21), I fantasized the greatest scam of my life. I would have SPORTS ILLUSTRATED send me there to cover it for all the exasperated Cubs fans around the country still faithfully awaiting the second coming of the pennant. After all, I had kept the torch burning since the halcyon days of Bill Nicholson and was qualified.

Well, you sent the right man in Roy Blount. I was there vociferously through his words and Carl Iwasaki's photographs. Thanks to them, I and a million other overlooked big league prospects got that second chance we know we deserved. Too bad the '69 Cubbies didn't get one too.

ERK HANAUER
Associate Professor
Department of Physical Education
California State University, Fullerton
Fullerton, Calif.

Sir

Many thanks to Roy Blount for recounting the most memorable week of my life. From an early November workout at Wingley Field to driving for grounds in the Arizona sun to coming home to see myself on national TV on the VCR to finally seeing my picture in your magazine, which I've read since my first childhood, the whole experience was strictly fantasyland.

And I wasn't the only one so enchanted. Blount told me during an intersquad game, after he threw out Randy Hundley from third and I threw out Glenn Beckert from short,

that "playing ball is easy. I don't know how I'm ever going to write this story." He was so involved with the camaraderie and the game itself that I never saw him take a note, much less conduct an interview. Many of the campers went the whole week without knowing that Roy was covering the event for SL.

But you did a great job anyway, Roy. And I'm sorry about not getting over for that pop-up. You see, I had just booted one, and I didn't want to embarrass myself again in front of all the cameras.

JIMMY SILARI
Camper '83 All-Stars
Niles, Ill.

SLICK SIXERS

Sir

As a player, Julius Erving is all class, but I was even more impressed by what he said in Bruce Newman's article on the 76ers (*This May Be One for the Books*, Feb. 28). "I don't feel incomplete or inadequate in any way because I haven't won an NBA championship. I don't lie awake nights and think about it. I know I've given my best to the public, and the rest is really out of my hands. I can accept that."

What refreshing, mature and reasonable words regarding winning and losing. Perhaps the Julius Erving School of Thought will overtake the Vince Lombardi School. Coming as they do from such an outstanding man and athlete, these words carry considerable weight. Who knows? Perhaps they will one day be recited at all Little League banquets, youth soccer matches, Pop Warner games and even collegiate and pro contests. "I haven't won. I've given my best. I can accept that." If Dr. J can accept it, maybe we all can.

HARRY CLAUS
Oakhurst, N.J.

Sir

Bruce Newman's article on the 76ers was magnificent. I was glad to see that Maurice Cheeks got some deserved recognition. However, you published three pictures of the Sixers in action against the Houston Rockets, and in each a Sixer is shown passing (Andrew Toney), blocking (Bobby Jones) or driving (Cheeks) against former 76er Caldwell Jones. Anything against Jones?

MARCO PAVIA
Pelham, N.Y.

• Nope, he just happened to be there when we clicked the shutter — ED

Sir

SL's coverage of the NBA has improved recently, as is evidenced by articles in your Feb. 21 and Feb. 28 issues. However, your continued

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mathematical aptitude is declining. If the Boston Celtics have sold out more than 100 straight games at 15,320 in the Boston Garden, please explain to me how the Sisters' average of 15,229 per game could be the league-leading attendance. Is this what they mean by the new math?

BROWN SIROTTA
Franklin Square, N.Y.

• Not quite. The Celtics have played two of their home games in the Hartford Civic Center Arena, where they drew only 11,762 against the Pistons on Nov. 30 and 12,742 against the Bulls on Jan. 31. Thus Boston's average attendance figure was 15,101 at week's end, less than the Sisters' 15,311, and now also less than that of the Lakers, who had taken over the league lead at 15,345.—ED

INDOOR SPORT

Sir:

Bravo! Within the span of three weeks, SI has masterfully covered two subjects that I can really get excited about—beautiful women in bikinis and indoor soccer. Frank Deford's fine article on the MISL (*Show, Sex and Suburbs*, Feb. 28) summed up the joy and frustration of being a fan of indoor soccer: the joy of seeing cities like Baltimore, Kansas City and St. Louis fall in love with their teams and support them wildly, and the frustration of seeing the sport founder in other cities and, so far, on the national level.

I hope that people like Earl Fottman and the Lewises do not give up. Someday when people are tired of real or threatened strikes by so-called professionals in other big league sports, they'll wake up and make the MISL truly major on the American sports scene.

MARK RATCLIFF
Columbi, Pa.

Sir:

Thank you, SI! For the past four years, as I have traveled around the country on business, I have tried to introduce as many sports fans as possible to the wonders of MISL soccer. Now, in one fell swoop you have done the deed. Perhaps this will further the growth of the most exciting, enjoyable and sensible of winter pastimes. Long live the MISL!

BOB MCALLY
Creve Coeur, Mo.

Sir:

I just finished reading the article on indoor soccer—and, yawn, no offense to you or to author Frank Deford, I was barely able to get through it. No wonder the MISL is such a joke. There's more emphasis placed on light shows, music and fireworks than on the game itself. If people want that sort of thing, they can go to the circus or the movies.

Let's face it, soccer is about as American as communion. I mean, who wants to watch a bunch of white-toothed, hairystyled, "normal-sized guys" with tight, fluorescent shorts strut their stuff on the artificial turf? Not I. The MISL is going to need a lot more than a bunch

of sexy guys who can simultaneously smile and kick a ball. I'll give you credit for trying to explain indoor soccer, however.

BRIAN LYNCH
Norwell, Mass.

GARS AND CRASHES

Sir:

In a short but well written piece (*The Kang Was Right, Good Buddy*, Feb. 28) Sam Moses captured much of the essence of the finest and most competitive form of auto racing in the United States. The Daytona 500 is spectacular, but it remains only a sample of the level of competition that NASCAR racing offers each week at tracks like Talladega, Pocono and Riverside. The 1982 Indianapolis 500 was heralded as a great race because the first two cars were just yards apart at the finish. This happens at practically every event on the NASCAR circuit, and I, for one, am glad that SPORTS ILLUSTRATED provided this taste of what is becoming America's No. 1 sport.

WILLIAM R. TURNER
Martinsville, Va.

Sir:

In response to Sam Moses' article, I object to the statement, "A crash is the most spectacular thing that can happen at an auto race. It excites people, and it pleases and soothes them when the driver walks away from it." I also object to his use of a phrase like "a gymnast doing handstands" to describe a crash. He implied that an end-over-end crash is harmless, the sheer violence of such a crash is quite clearly illustrated in your photographs and by the injuries to Bruce Jacobs.

A crash is the single most horrible aspect of an auto race. In no way does it excite me. Rather, I find it upsetting. True, I am relieved when the driver walks away, but this doesn't make an accident exciting or satisfying.

The drama in auto racing comes from watching one car overtaking another or photo finishes. As a case in point, there was Neil Bonnett's spectacular charge back into the lead group at Daytona. Moses failed to even mention that.

STEVE HELM
Minneapolis

Sir:

The backup car brought in for Cale Yarborough at Daytona was not a one-year-old Grand Prix, as Sam Moses stated. It was a 1981 Pontiac LeMans. It is the same car that, because of its sloped roof, caused a turmoil at Daytona in 1981 over spoiler heights and the same car that Benny Parsons used to break the 200 mph barrier at Talladega Speedway last year. Please clarify this, because it does make a difference to us 20-year-veteran NASCAR fans.

ED BILES
Griffin, Ga.

• Yarborough's victory car was indeed the same 1981 Pontiac LeMans driven by Parsons in his record-setting (200.176) qualifying run at Talladega last year. The '81 LeMans in

which Bobby Allison finished second to Richard Petty at Daytona two years ago was not the same car but a stablemate.—ED

JAMAICA

Sir:

Many memories were stirred by Kenny Moore's article on Jamaican athletes (*Land of Sprinters and Dreamers*, Feb. 14). The name Herb McKenley had a special meaning for all athletes who grew up, as I did, in Guyana—then British Guiana—in the '50s and '60s. It meant running with a special abandon, in keeping with his dictum that the most important aspect of middle-distance running was "bravery." It was not unusual for McKenley to cover the first 200 meters of a 400-meter race in less than 21 seconds. It took one more generation for the world to produce Lee Evans, whose conditioning enabled him to maintain his form over the final 200 meters.

My abiding interest in McKenley lies in his disappointing fourth-place finish in the 1948 Olympic 200. Because he had shown superior speed in the 100 in previous races and strength in the 400 meters—he was the world-record holder—it was expected that McKenley would easily win the 200. Was it a matter of hubris? Is the 200 meters so different that no transfer of talents could occur between the shorter and longer sprints? Whatever the reasons, McKenley remains unique among Olympic athletes in reaching the finals in all three sprint races.

WINSTON JERRICK
New York City

Sir:

Jamaica is the birthplace of numerous great athletes; yet for many, Jamaica means even more. The island has given rise to great leaders, such as the late Bob Marley, a musical genius with a genuine, heartfelt concern for the people. It is through these Jamaicans that the American has learned many values, and I have the utmost respect for the "land of sprinters and dreamers." I sincerely hope that Jamaica, with its prodigious character and tremendous natural beauty, will be given increasing recognition in coming years.

TEDDY WINSTEAD
Baltimore

Sir:

I was disappointed that this year's selection of swimmable models (*"The Finest Island that Eyes Have Beheld"*, Feb. 14) excluded non-whites. Irony is added to insult when you consider that the chosen tropical island spot, Jamaica, is lush with beautiful women of color.

B.A. HARDEN
Atlanta

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